

1

George
Asakura

Drowning Love



*Drowning
Love*

Drowning Love

1

The World that Opened Up
When I was 12 p3

3

Bonds p109

2

Gravity p65

4

Impatience p149



BACK THEN, WHEN I WAS 12...

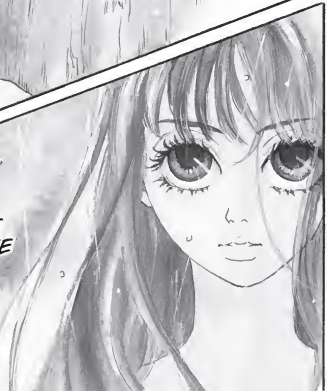
*I THOUGHT
I KNEW
EVERYTHING.*

*I THOUGHT I
COULD HAVE
ANYTHING.*

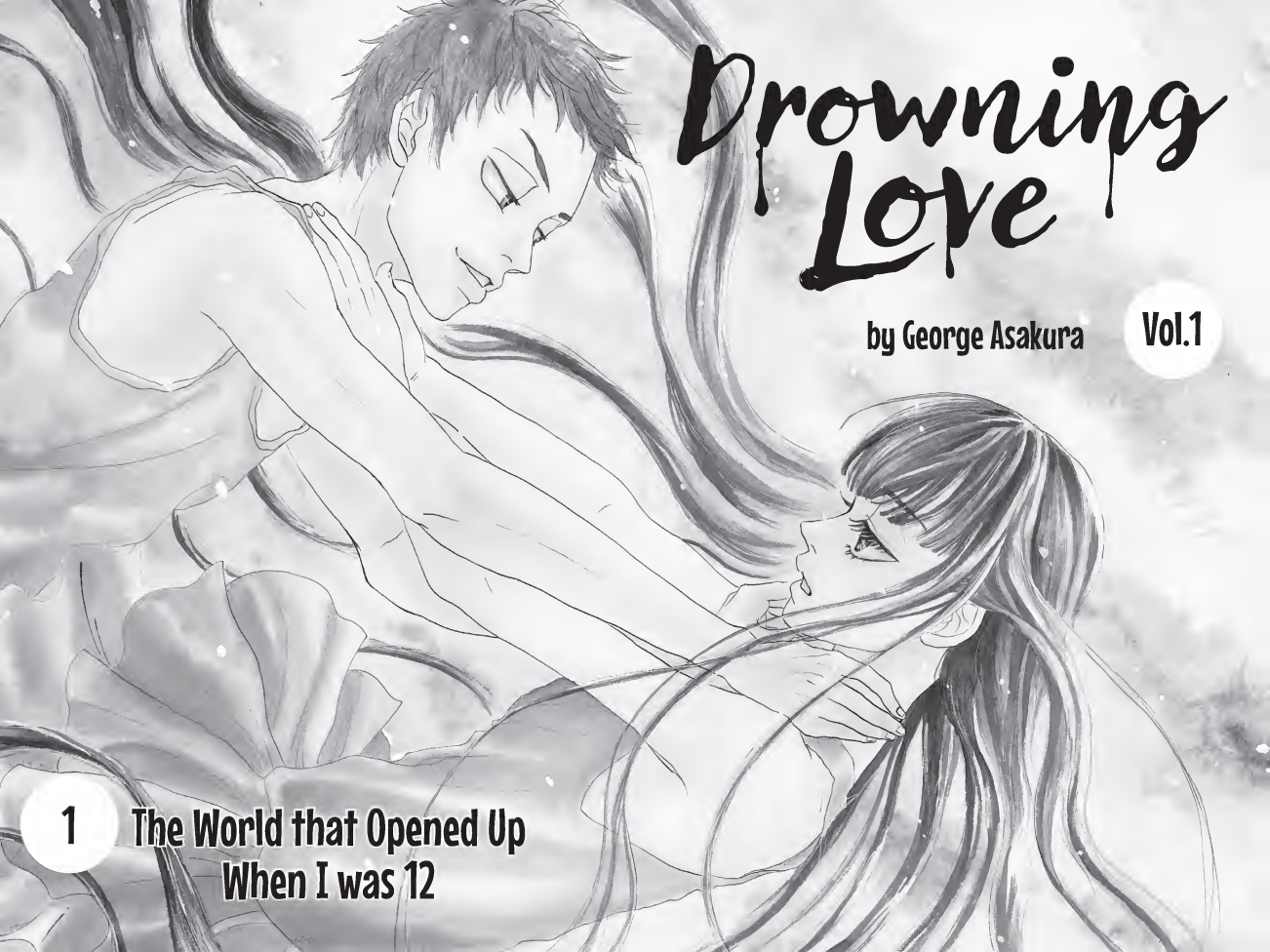
SHHHHH



*I THOUGHT I
COULD GIVE HIM
ANYTHING, IF ONLY
TO MAKE HIM
LAUGH WITH JOY.*



*AND I THOUGHT I
WAS THE ONLY ONE
WHO COULD.*



Drowning Love

by George Asakura

Vol.1

1 The World that Opened Up
When I was 12



WHAT I DESIRED WERE THINGS LIKE THE
FLASH, SHOCK, AND HEAT OF LIGHTNING
COURSING THROUGH MY BODY.

NATSUME-
CHAN!

FACE
YOUR BODY
A LITTLE
MORE
TOWARDS
ME.

I WANTED MORE.

YES!
THAT'S
IT!

THINGS THAT MADE MY EYES SPIN. THINGS THAT TOOK
MY BREATH AWAY. THINGS THAT MADE ME TREMBLE.



IS THAT
ALL YOU
CARE
ABOUT?

SORRY I
TOOK SO
LONG! MAN,
I'M HUNGRY!

NICE WORK
TODAY,
NATSUME!

Good
girl!

LET'S HIT
SHIBUYA AND
GRAB SOME
GRUB!
♡



YEAH,
WELL, YOU
CAN'T TELL
HER AGE
JUST BY
LOOKING.

I WAS REALLY
WORRIED ABOUT
NATSUME-CHAN
BEING SO YOUNG,
SINCE SHE'S ONLY IN
SIXTH YEAR ELEMEN-
TARY... BUT SHE'S SO
POPULAR WITH THE
READERS!

NATSUME!

ABOUT SIX
MONTHS
AGO, I GOT
A JOB
MODELING
FOR A
FASHION
MAGAZINE
FOR
JUNIOR-
HIGH GIRLS.

LOOK
AT HOW
EYE-
CATCHING
SHE IS.

FRANKLY,
SHE'S STUN-
NING.

WESTERN
FASHION

**WE'RE
MOVING!**

DAD?!

**AND
MOM AND
RYUTA,
TOO?**

**THE JOB
I WAS
AGAINST
IN THE
FIRST
PLACE!**

**WHICH
MEANS
YOU'RE
QUITTING
YOUR
MODELING
JOB!**

GRAB

**WHAT
?!**

**WHAT
?
WHAT
?**

**SORRY
TO HAVE
TROUBLED
YOU.**

**HO
HO
HO**

**WHAT
?
WHAT
?**

ZOOOOOM

VROOOOM

**SO
YOU KNOW HOW
I WENT HOME TO
SEE YOUR GRANDPA
WHO'D DISOWNED
ME SOME 15 YEARS
AGO?**

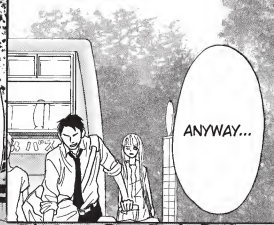
**WHAT
?!**

**SEE,
I THOUGHT HE'D
JUST GOTTEN
DRUNK AND TOOK
A TUMBLE DOWN
THE STAIRS...**

**I KEEP
TELLING
HIM IT'S
DANGEROUS!**

CHUG-A

CHUG-A



...I'M
GOING TO
SUCCEED HIM
AS HEAD OF
THIS INN.

ANYWAY...



THE
"HINEMOSU
INN" IS OUR
NEW HOME!

HINEMOSU
INN

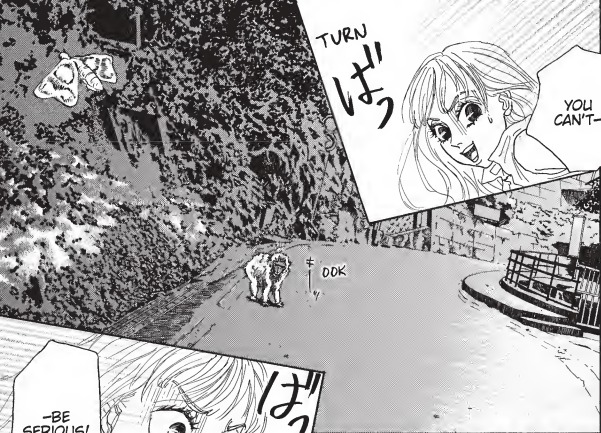
WAIT!

HO
HO
HO
!

I'M
SUDDENLY
GOING TO BE
A MISTRESS!

HA
HA
HA
!

THIS
PLACE IS
STEEPED
IN TRADI-
TION!
I'M THE
EIGHTH-
GENER-
ATION
HEAD!





YOU...

...YOU'RE
JOKING,
RIGHT?

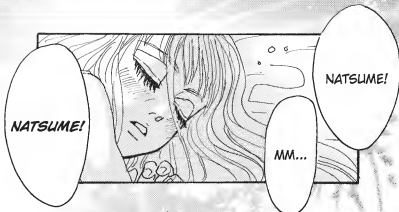


WELL?
IT'S A GREAT
PLACE, ISN'T
IT?

*THE VERY SAME DAY MY SUMMER VACATION
CAME TO AN END...*



...I WAS KIDNAPPED AND TAKEN
TO THIS TOURIST TRAP OF A TOWN
CALLED UKIGUMO, FIVE HOURS AWAY
FROM TOKYO.



NATSUME!

NATSUME!

MM...



WOW.

SHWUSHH

FAR
AS THE EYE CAN
SEE.

THAT'S
THE OCEAN,
ALL RIGHT.

EHEI

EHEI

WHADDAYA
THINK?
THREE
PADS
ENOUGH?

SHWOOSH

SHOPPING
WITH
THEM
WAS ES-
PECIALLY
FUN.

WE CAN
SEE
THEM,
YOU
KNOW!

AH
HA
HA
HA!

...WITH MY
MODELING
FRIENDS, IT
WAS JUST
ENOSHIMA,
THOUGH.

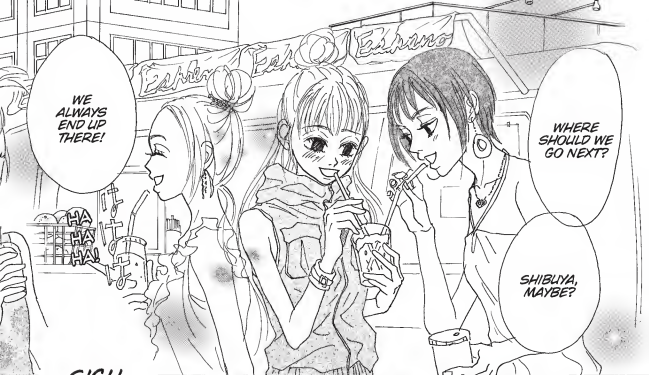
I WENT
TO THE
BEACH
RECENTLY
...

YEAH,
I
GUESS
...

THE WATER'S
SO CLEAR!
IT'S LIKE
WE'RE
ON SOME
FOREIGN
RESORT
BEACH!

Hawaii

Hawaii



SIGH

...



SIS, I'M HUNGRY!

SCARY...

BUT YOU CAN'T GO UP THERE.

LET'S TRY THIS RESTAURANT! WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE THE BUS, THOUGH.

I WANTED TO TRY THIS LOCAL SPECIALTY THEY HAVE HERE, "YAYA RICE CAKES"!

OH!

Hungry is healthy!

AMAZING! IKUGAMO GUIDE BOOK!

*SIGN: NO ENTRY

OH!

YOU HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK AND PASSED OUT LAST NIGHT. YOU DOIN' OKAY NOW?

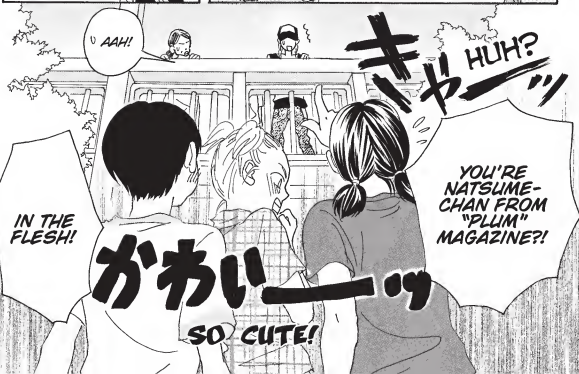
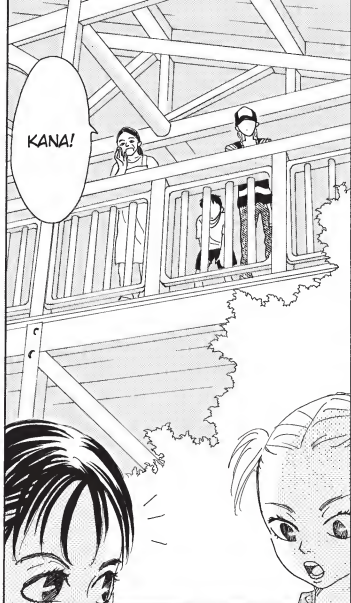
WORLD-FAMOUS YAYA CAKES! TRAVEL GUIDE RECOMMENDED!

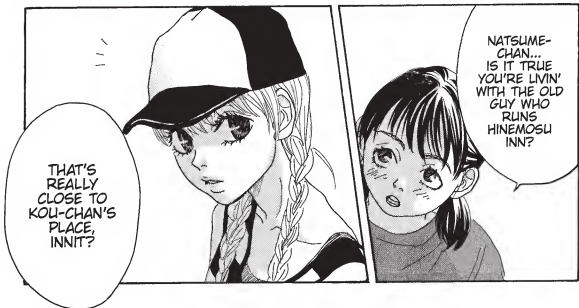
旅名物
ヤーヤ餅

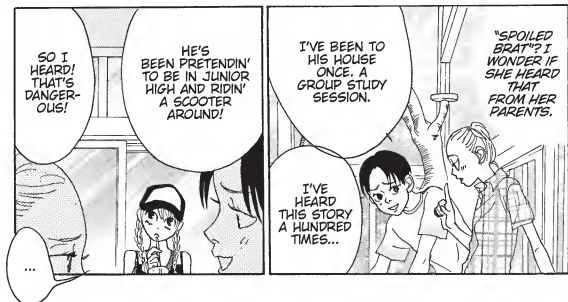
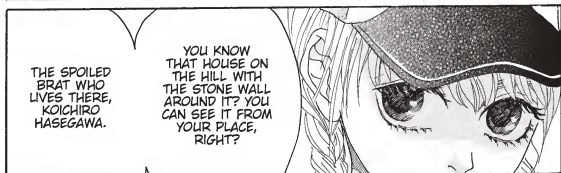
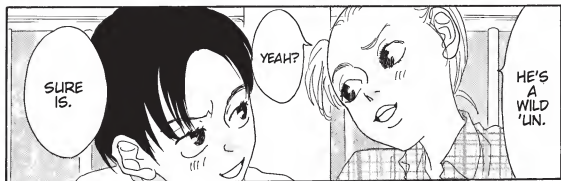
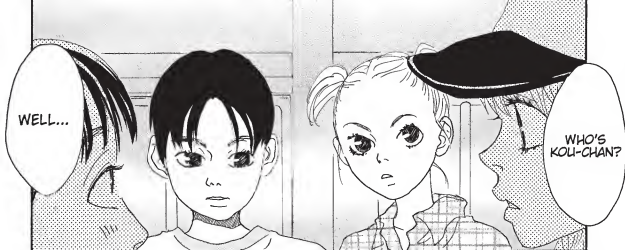
OH, HERE SHE COMES NOW!

YOU KNOW, I HAVE A DAUGHTER 'BOUT YOUR AGE...

COME ON IN!







NATSUME-CHAN.

BOYS OUR AGE ARE STILL KIDS. THEY'RE STILL A REALLY LONG WAY FROM BEING GROWN UP.

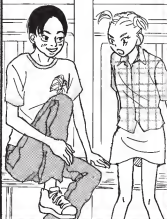
I DON'T GET IT.

OH, I SEE. THIS "KOU-CHAN" MUST BE A POPULAR BOY.

WHAT?!

THE LAST BUS IS COMING SOON.

THE EARLY EVENING BUS IS THE LAST?!



OH, HEY!

NATSUME-CHAN!

SEE YA TOMORROW!

NATSUME-CHAN!

YOU'RE TOTALLY ONE OF US NOW!

Is that good or bad...?

...YAY!

THEY
SAY A GOD'S
SUPPOSED TO
LIVE THERE.
YOU CAN'T GO
IN THE WATER.
IT'S SCARY...

WELL...

YEAH?

HUH?

UHM...

YA
KNOW HOW
THERE'S THAT
TORI GATE
NEAR THE
BEACH BEHIND
YOUR PLACE?

...BUT IF
YOU MANAGE
TO CATCH A
GLIMPSE OF
IT FROM THE
OPPOSITE
SHORE AT
SUNSET,
IT'S REALLY
PRETTY.

IT'D
MAKE ME
HAPPY IF YOU
CAME TO LIKE
OUR TOWN.

OKAY,
NATSLIME-
CHAN?

I WANNA
SHOW YOU
AROUND
SOMETIME!

THANK
YOU.

LOOKING
FORWARD
TO IT!



WHERE
WERE YOU?
YOU FORGOT
YOUR CELL
PHONE.

OH!

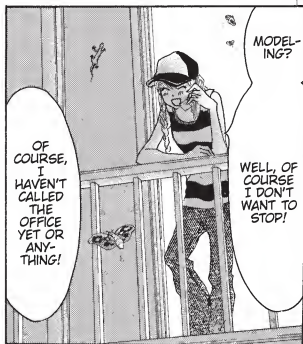
I'M
HOME!



THERE'S
AN-
OTHER
PARTY
GOING
ON.

COME
BY THE
MEETING
ROOM
LATER
AND
HELP
OUT!

WHOA...
SO MANY
TEXTS AND
MISSED
CALLS!



OF
COURSE,
I
HAVEN'T
CALLED
THE
OFFICE
YET OR
ANY-
THING!

MODEL-
ING?

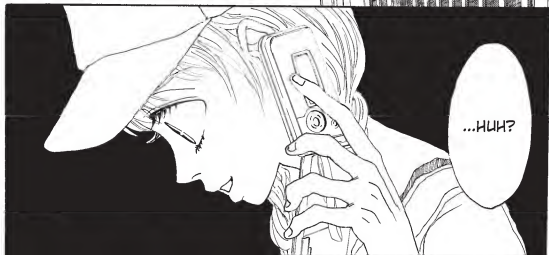
WELL, OF
COURSE
I DON'T
WANT TO
STOP!



YEAH,
TOTALLY!

HA HA
HA!

HUH? NO,
THEY TOTALLY
SPRUNG IT
ON ME BY
SURPRISE!
YESTERDAY
WAS THE FIRST
I KNEW!



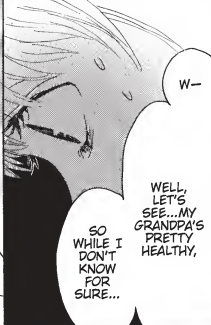
...HUH?



WE
COULD
HANG OUT
THEN!

...I MIGHT
BE ABLE TO
COME BACK
TO TOKYO
ON THE
WEEKENDS!

I
THINK
...



W—

WELL,
LET'S
SEE...MY
GRANDPA'S
PRETTY
HEALTHY,
SO
WHILE I
DON'T
KNOW
FOR
SURE...



OKAY, SEE
YA!

YEAH!

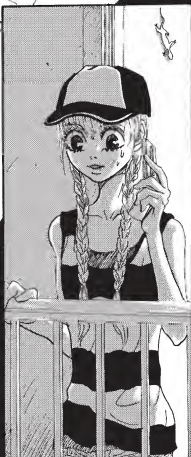
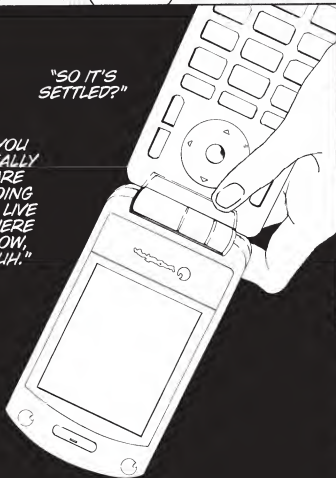
HA HA
HA

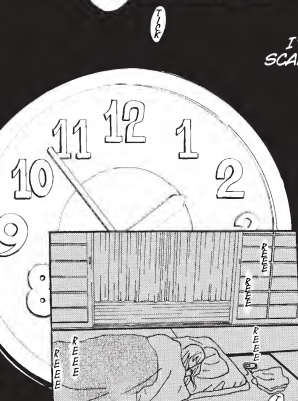
YEAH.

YEAH!

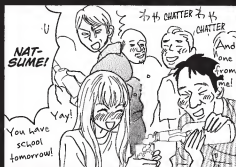
"SO IT'S
SETTLED?"

"YOU
REALLY
ARE
GOING
TO LIVE
THERE
NOW,
HUH!"

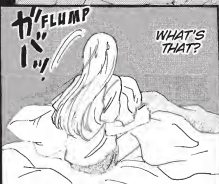
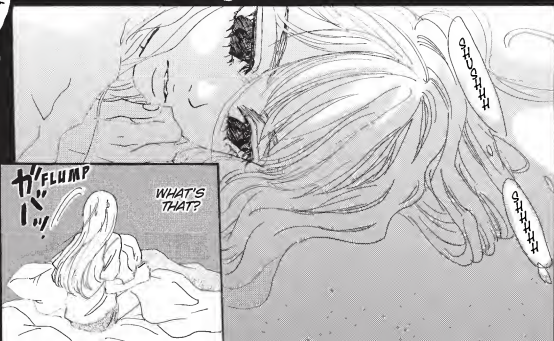




I'M
SCARED.



I'M SO
SCARED.



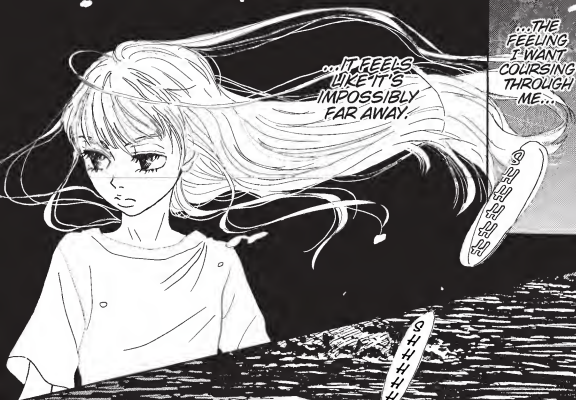


TOKYO ISN'T
THE ONLY
PLACE. I CAN
GET USED TO
BEING HERE,
TOO.

MY
THOUGHTS
ARE
RUNNING IN
STRANGE
DIRECTIONS.

...THE
THRILL I
DESIRE...

BUT OUT
HERE...



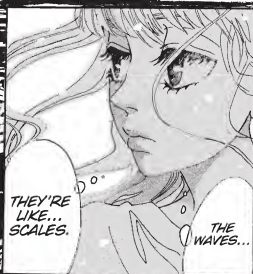
...IT FEELS
LIKE IT'S
IMPOSSIBLY
FAR AWAY.

...THE
FEELING
I WANT
COURSING
THROUGH
ME...

S
H
H
H
H
H
H

S
H
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H

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U
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THEY'RE
LIKE...
SCALES.

THE
WAVES...

MOVING
UNDER THE
PULSE OF
SOME GIANT
BEAST...

IT'S
LIKE THE
OCEAN IS
A LIVING
CREATURE.



I DON'T
GET
ANYTHING
HERE.



I
DON'T
GET IT.



THAT
CREEPS
ME
OUT.

WHAT
AM I
THINK-
ING?



1211
SPLOOSH

43



...?!

"THEY
SAY A GOD'S
SUPPOSED TO
LIVE THERE.
YOU CAN'T GO
IN THE WATER.
IT'S SCARY..."

OH!

FRANTIC
きょど ぽど

WHAT
THE-?!

THAT
WASN'T
THE
SOUND
OF
WAVES!

GASP
はぁ

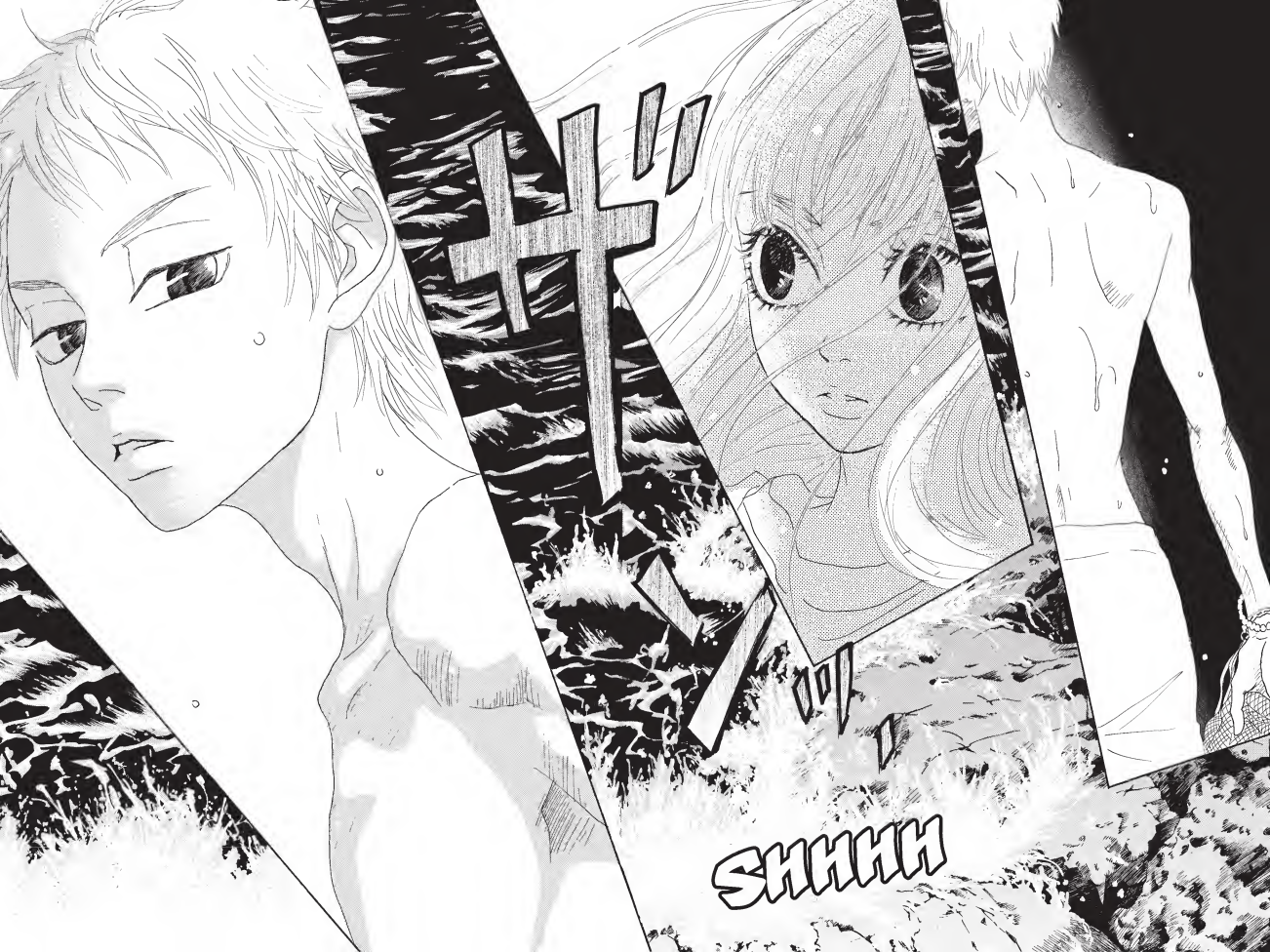
AH!

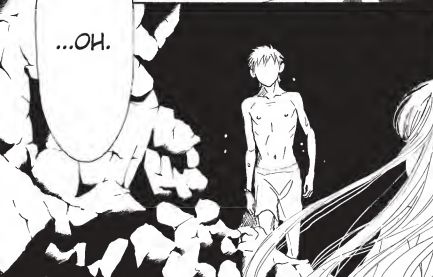
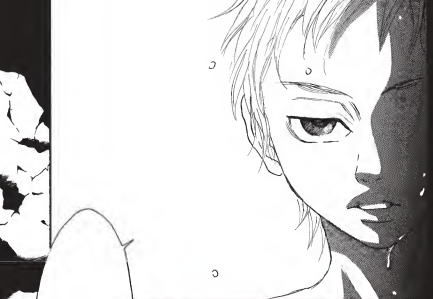
SPLDOOSH

SPLDOOSH

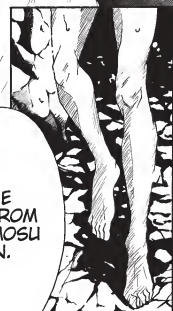
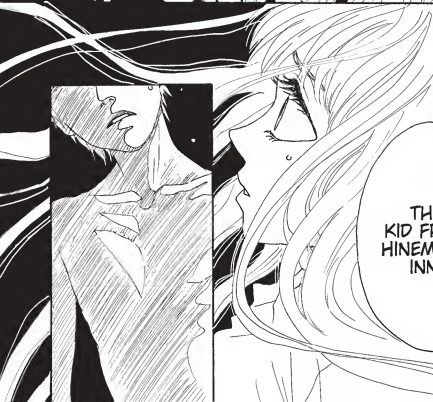
THERE'S
SOMETHING
HERE!







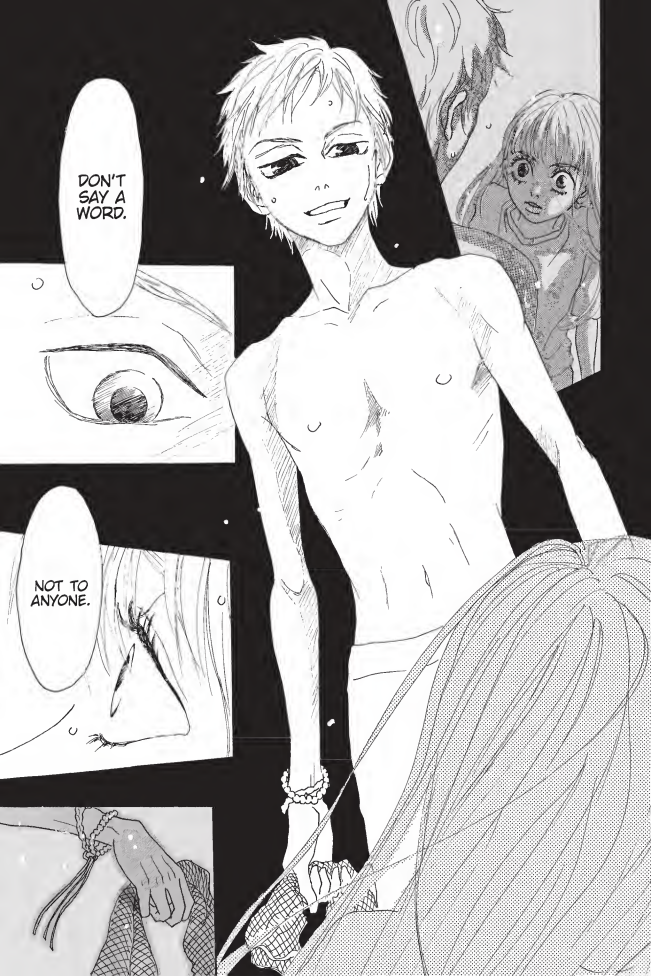
...OH.

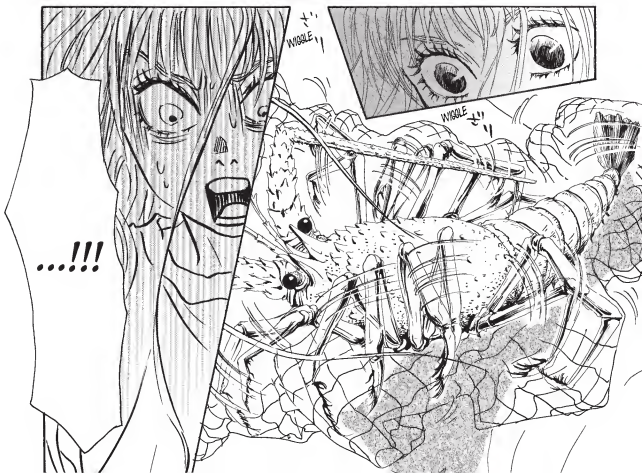
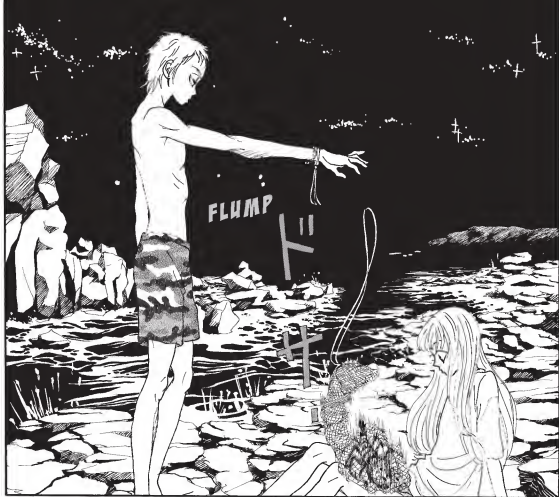


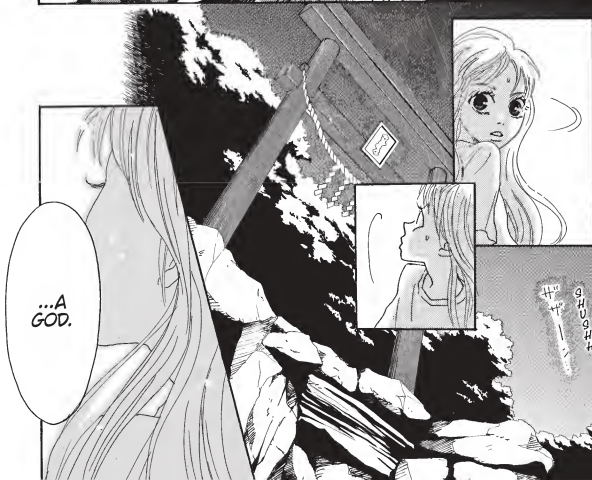
THE
KID FROM
HINEMOSU
INN.

DON'T
SAY A
WORD.

NOT TO
ANYONE.









OR
A GOD'S
SERVANT.



IT
WAS A
GOD.

THERE...

...IN THE
DARKNESS...

...IT
SHONE...

SO WHITE...



WHOA!

GOOD
MORNING!

I
THOUGHT WE
COULD GO
TO SCHOOL
TOGETHER,
NATSUME-
CHAN.

WE'RE HAVING
LOBSTER FOR
BREAKFAST! ONE
OF THE PARTY-
GOERS LEFT IT
AS A GIFT!

A CRAW-
FISH?!
SASHIMI?!

It's so
expensive!

IT'S SO
GOOD...

AH...

I
THOUGHT
WE WERE
KEEPING
IT...

CLACK

CHOMP

THAT'S
AN AWFUL
CUTE DRESS
YOU'VE GOT
THERE.

OH,
IT'S NO
TROUBLE,
REALLY.

THANKS!
IT'S SO
FAR OUT
OF YOUR
WAY.

OH!

THANK
YOU!

I
TOLD YOU
ABOUT IT
YESTERDAY,
RIGHT?

KOU-CHAN'S
HOUSE.

HUH?

THERE
IT IS.

...

SEEMS
LIKE IT
OVERLOOKS
THE WHOLE
TOWN...

OH, I
SEE...

SO, THIS
"KOU-
CHAN"...

...



THERE'S
NO
SENSE IN
ASKING.

IT'S
NOTHING.

...NAH.

HM?



SHE'S
COME ALL
THE WAY
FROM
TOKYO.

NATSUME
MOCHIZUKI-
CHAN.

WE
HAVE
A NEW
STUDENT
TODAY.



I
WANT TO
KNOW...

...FOR
MYSELF.



HUH...?

CHATTER

CHATTER

NOW,
Y'ALL BE
NICE TO
HER.

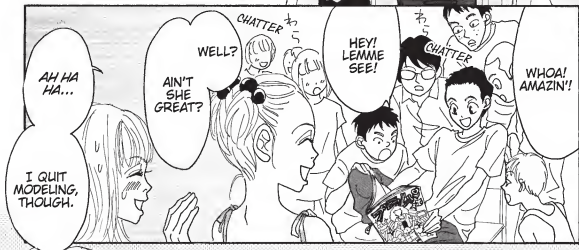


THAT BOY...
MUST NOT
HAVE BEEN
"KOU-CHAN."

BOW!

ALL
RISE!

HE'S
NOT
HERE.

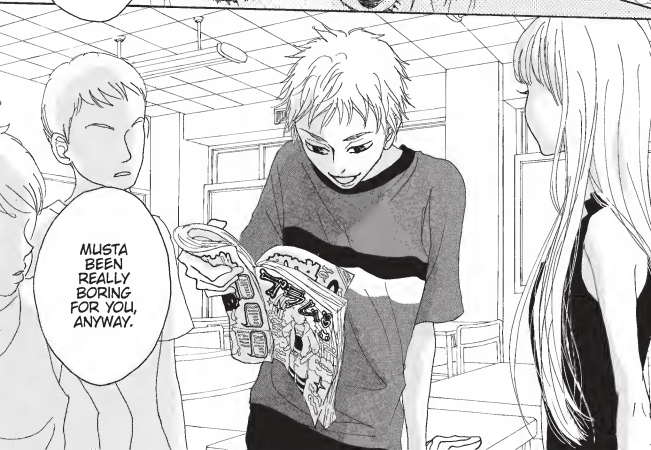




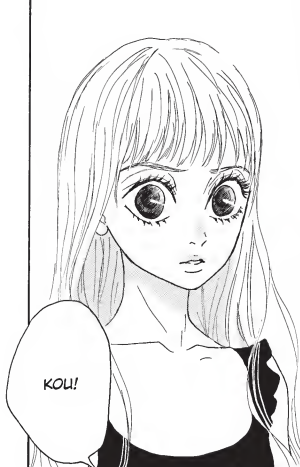
IT'S AN
EXCUSE TO
GET RID OF
YOU.

RUSTLE
!!
#

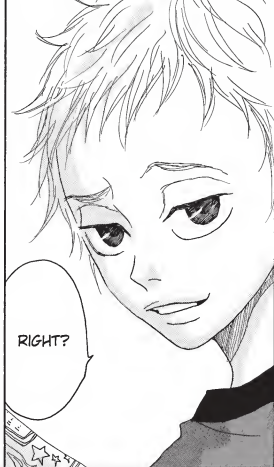
WELL,
I BET
THINGS'RE
EASIER
ON YOU
NOW.



MUSTA
BEEN
REALLY
BORING
FOR YOU,
ANYWAY.

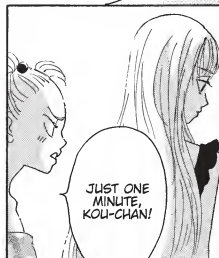


KOU!



RIGHT?

WHAT THE HELL, DUDE?
YOU MISSED
THE OPENING
CEREMONY AND
AFTERNOON
HOMEROOM!



JUST ONE
MINUTE,
KOU-CHAN!



RUSTLE

IT'S
WHY I
CAME.

YEAH.

YOU
COMIN'
OVER?

WE
CAN
CONTINUE
FROM
YESTER-
DAY.



YEAH,
THAT'S
RIGHT!

YOU'RE
BEIN' RUDE
TO NATSUME-
CHAN,
AIN'TCHA?!

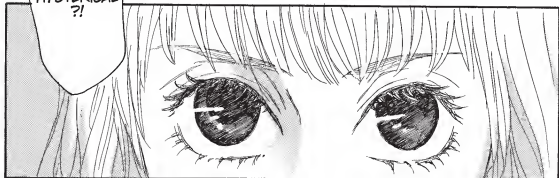
HE DON'T
HAVE TIME
FOR YOU
AN' YOUR
FRIENDS,
HAYASE!

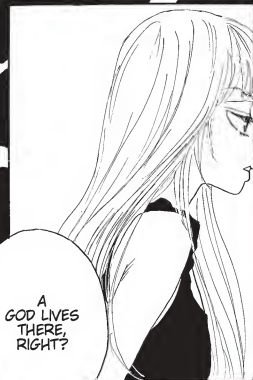
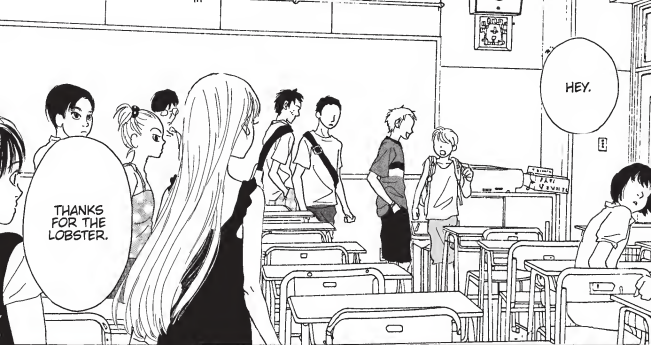


WHADDAYA
MEAN,
HYSTERICAL
?!

HYS-
TERICAL
HAYASE!

LET'S
LEAVE THIS
HYSTERICAL
GAL AND
SPLIT.





A
GOD LIVES
THERE,
RIGHT?

"DON'T
SAY A
WORD."



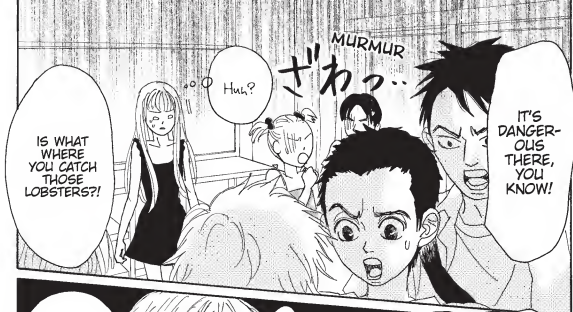
...YOU'RE NOT
SUPPOSED
TO GO IN
THE WATER,
RIGHT?

BUT THAT
PLACE WITH
THE TORI
GATE...



WHAT?!

...

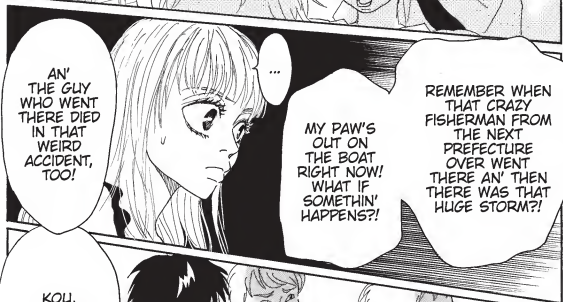


IS WHAT
WHERE
YOU CATCH
THOSE
LOBSTERS?!

... Huh?

MURMUR
ざわっ...

IT'S
DANGER-
OUS
THERE,
YOU
KNOW!

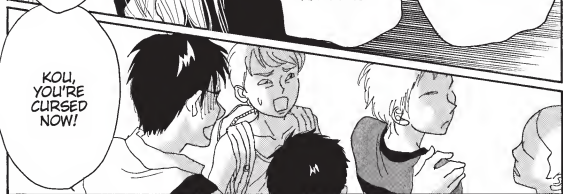


AN'
THE GUY
WHO WENT
THERE DIED
IN THAT
WEIRD
ACCIDENT,
TOO!

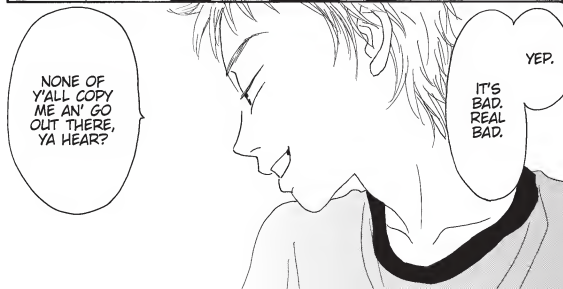
...

MY PAW'S
OUT ON
THE BOAT
RIGHT NOW!
WHAT IF
SOMETHIN'
HAPPENS?!

REMEMBER WHEN
THAT CRAZY
FISHERMAN FROM
THE NEXT
PREFECTURE
OVER WENT
THERE AN' THEN
THERE WAS THAT
HUGE STORM?!



KOU,
YOU'RE
CURSED
NOW!



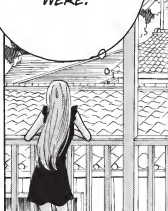
NONE OF
Y'ALL COPY
ME AN' GO
OUT THERE,
YA HEAR?

YEP.

IT'S
BAD.
REAL
BAD.

AND THEN
HE GOT
CAUGHT
BY THAT
TEACHER...

I'M
SURPRISED
HOW SERIOUS
EVERYONE'S
REACTIONS
WERE.



WHAT
AN
ARRO-
GANT
BRAT!

YESTER-
DAY...

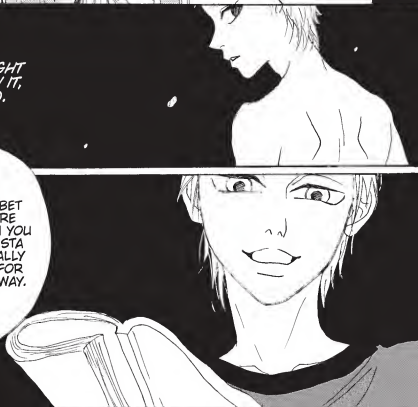
A GOD,
HUH...



I
THOUGHT
I SAW IT,
TOO.

WITH
MY
OWN
EYES.

WELL, I BET
THINGS'RE
EASIER ON YOU
NOW. MUSTA
BEEN REALLY
BORING FOR
YOU, ANYWAY.





WHAT
A
JOKE.

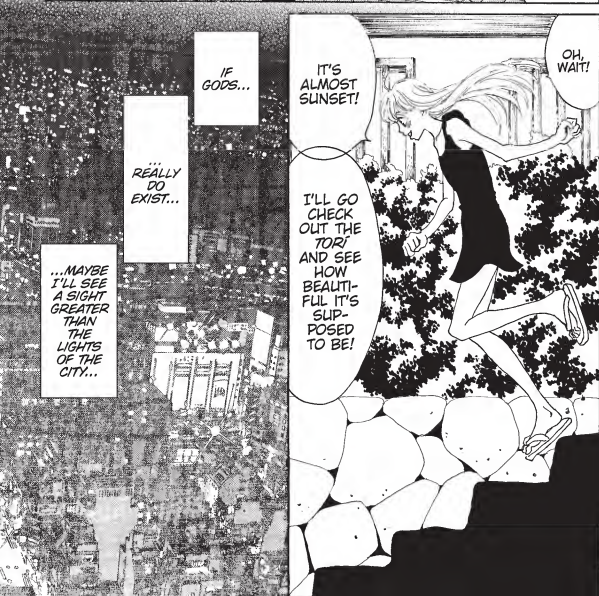
HE'S
SO FULL
OF HIM-
SELF.

BUT IT
TURNED
OUT TO
BE SOME
BRATTY
BUMPKIN.



I FEEL LIKE
I'VE LOST
FAITH.

AWW...



IF
GODS...

...
REALLY
DO
EXIST...

...MAYBE
I'LL SEE
A SIGHT
GREATER
THAN
THE
LIGHTS
OF THE
CITY...

IT'S
ALMOST
SUNSET!

I'LL GO
CHECK
OUT THE
TORI
AND SEE
HOW
BEAUTI-
FUL IT'S
SUP-
POSED
TO BE!

OH,
WAIT!

HEY!
YOU!

MAYBE
I'LL SEE
SOMETHING
THAT MAKES
ME LIKE THIS
UKIGUMO
PLACE.

*SIGN: NO ENTRY

UGH.

YOU
RATTED
ON ME AN'
THEN A
TEACHER
CAME AN'
DRAGGED
ME HOME!

...

SHUT
UP!

AND YET
YOU'RE
OUT HERE
FISHING?



...NOT
BELIEVE...

S H U S H H H

...IN
GODS?

DO
YOU...

S H H H H



THEY
EXIST.

...I
THOUGHT
NOT.

HM?

AND
WHAT
IF I
DON'T?



YOU
WERE
BORED,
RIGHT?

OH.

THEN
WHY
DID YOU-

MOST
OF 'EM.

W H A T ?!

S H U S H H H

S H H H H

...I'M
JUST
LASHING
OUT.

...HEH.

THAT'S
TRUE OF
ME, TOO,
ISN'T IT?
IT'S WHY I
BECAME A
MODEL...

THAT'S
JUST
DUMB
TALK!

BUT
NOW...

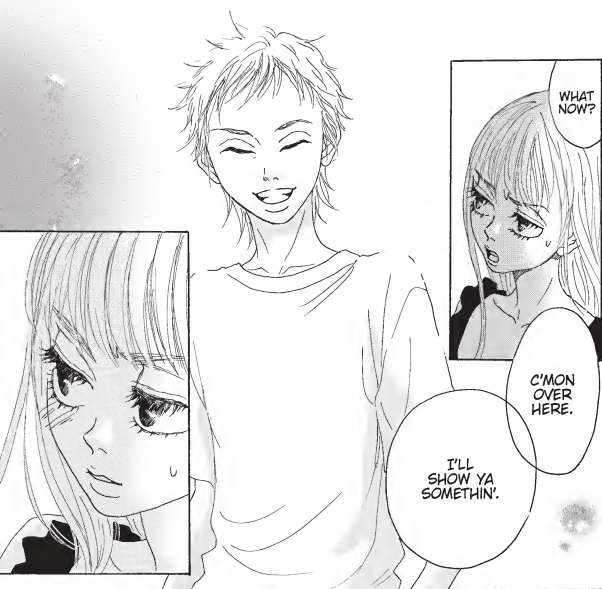
WHAT?

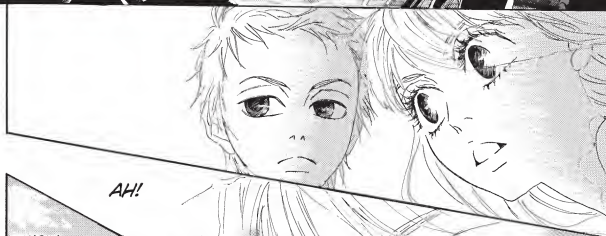
YOU'RE
RIGHT. LIFE
IS SOUL-
CRUSHINGLY
BORING.

THERE'S
NOTHING
TO DO
OUT
HERE.

SO
YOU DID IT
FOR THE THRILL.
YOU'RE WAITING
FOR SOMETHING
TO HAPPEN.

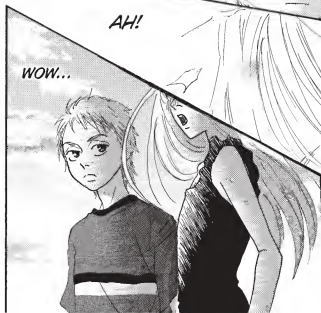
HUH?

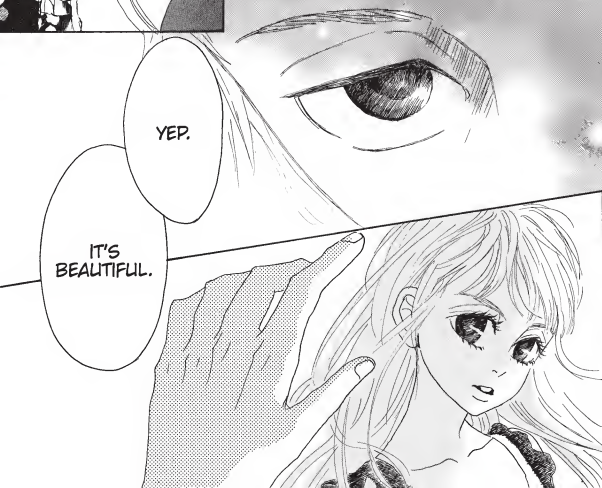
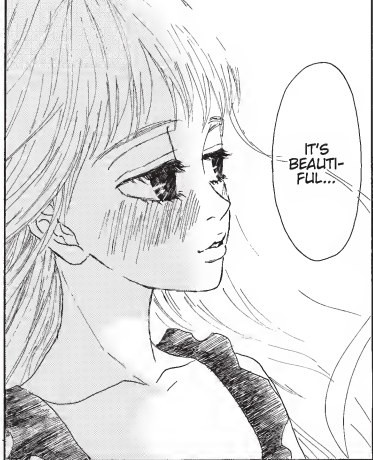
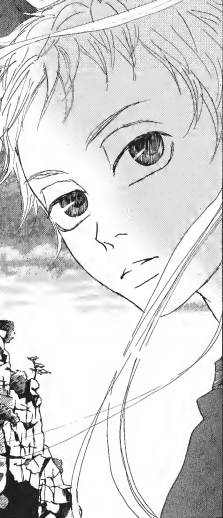




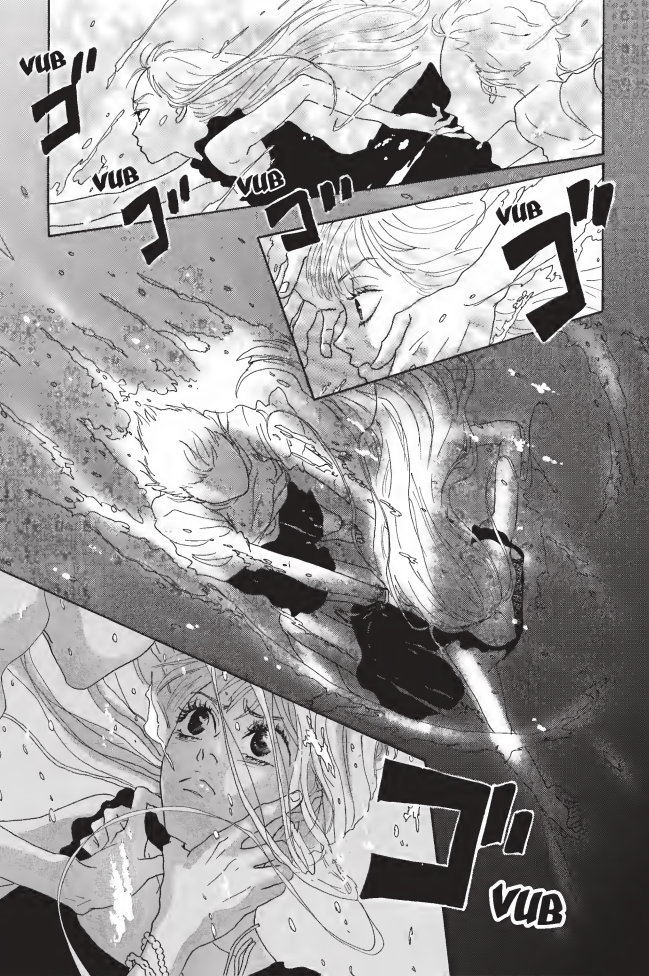
AH!

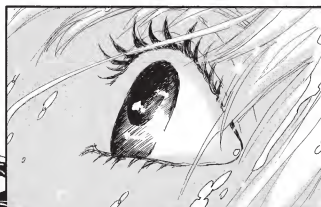
WOW...















I CAN GO
ANYWHERE I
WANT ON THE
MOUNTAIN OR
IN THE SEA.



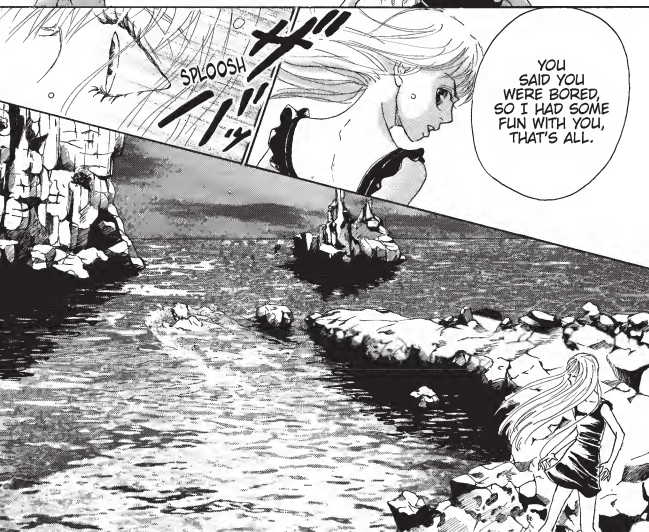
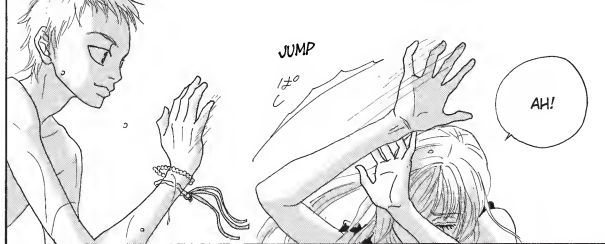
DUMMY.

'S'OKAY IF
I DO IT.



...THEY
LET ME DO
WHATEVER
I WANT.

THE
PEOPLE
OF THIS
TOWN...

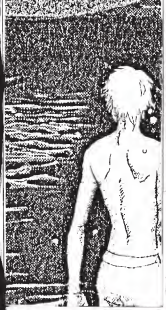




OH...

WHY DOES
HE LOOK
LIKE HE'S
GLOWING
...?

THERE
IT IS
AGAIN.

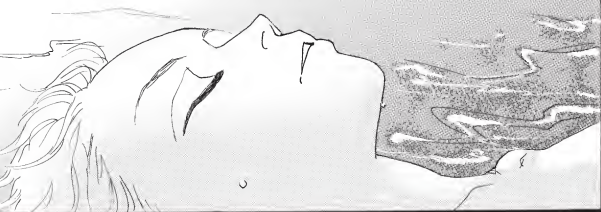


IT'S MYST-
TERIOUS.



HE
SHINES...



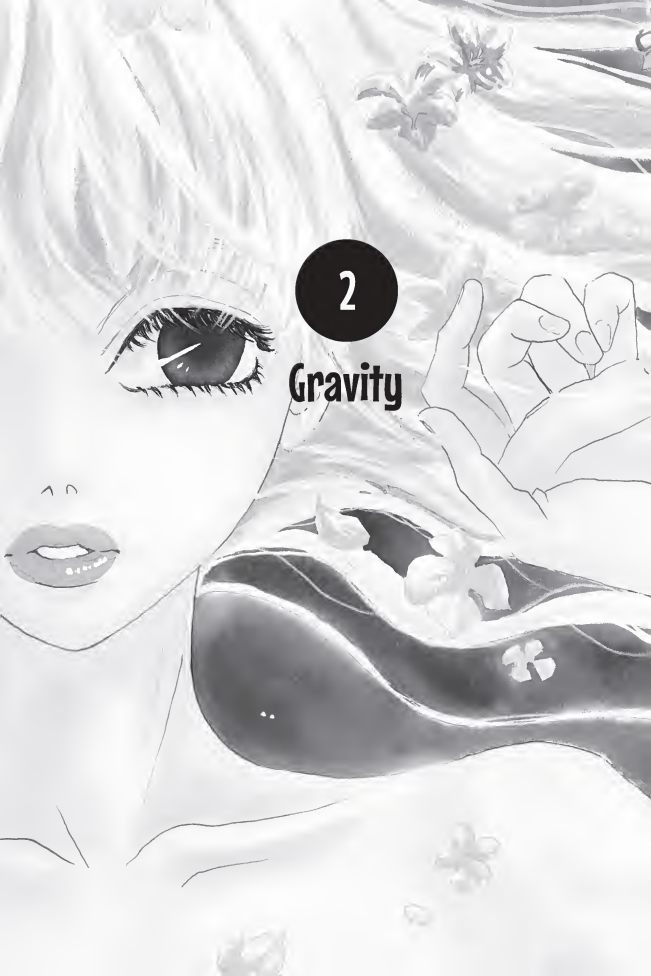


*I FEEL
HOT, LIKE
I'VE BEEN
BURNED.*

*I
MUST BE
STRANGE,
TOO.*







2

Gravity



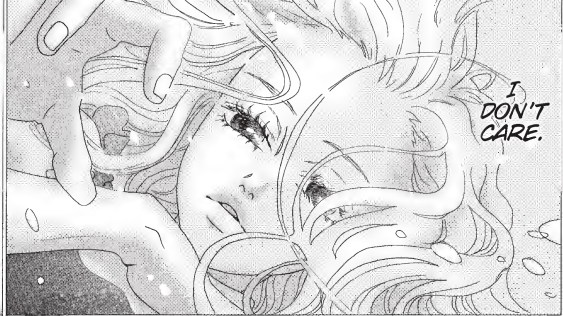
AAH...

I'M
BEING
SUBSLUMED
INTO HIS
LIGHT...

MY
BODY IS
DISSOLVING.

I...

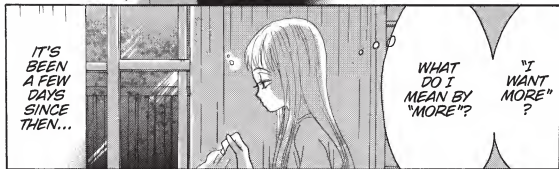
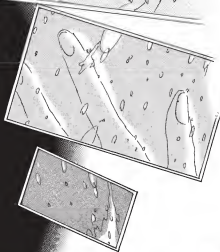
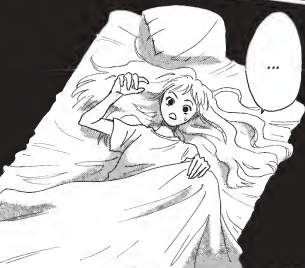
AND
YOU'RE
TO
BLAME.
A
DISAS-
TER IS
COMING.



I
DON'T
CARE.



I
WANT
MORE.



IT'S
BEEN
A FEW
DAYS
SINCE
THEN...

WHAT
DO I
MEAN BY
"MORE"?

"I
WANT
MORE"
?

...UGH.

NO
DISASTERS
HAVE
COME.

BUT
NOTHING
HAS
HAPPENED.

I WANTED
TO TELL
HIM OFF...

ザザーン
SHUSHHH

...BUT
HE'S NOT
HERE
TODAY,
EITHER.

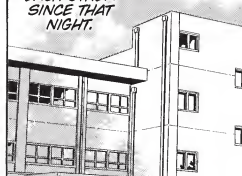
HE HASN'T
TALKED TO ME
AT ALL, BUT
THAT'S HIS
PROBLEM!

WELL, I
GUESS
HE'LL
BE AT
SCHOOL
...



...WE HADN'T
SPOKEN
A SINGLE
WORD TO
EACH OTHER
SINCE THAT
NIGHT.

WHEN
ALL
WAS
SAID
AND
DONE...



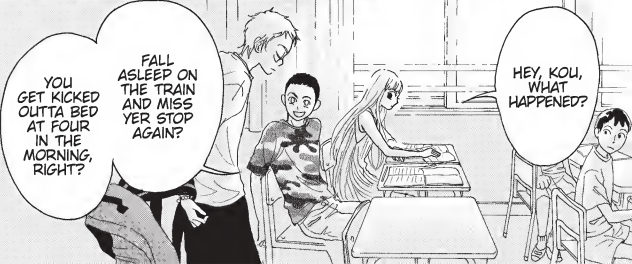
HASE-
GAWA!



I'LL
HAVE YOU
STAND
FOR THE
WHOLE
DAY!



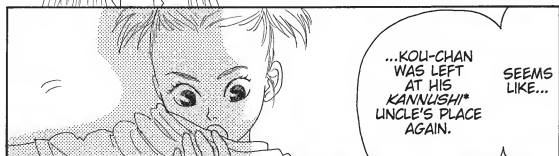
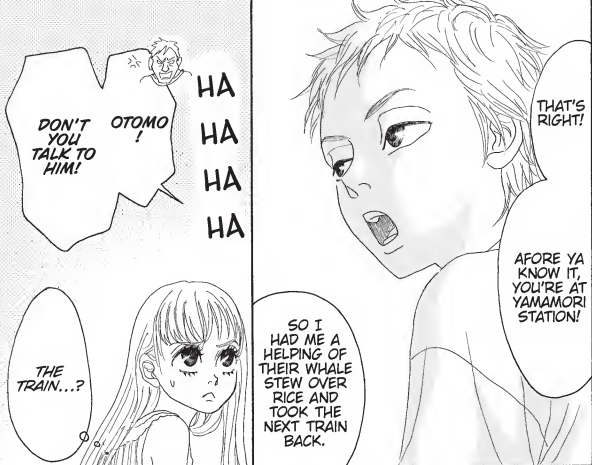
WHADDAYA
THINK
YOU'RE
DOIN',
COMING THIS
LATE?!



YOU
GET KICKED
OUTTA BED
AT FOUR
IN THE
MORNING,
RIGHT?

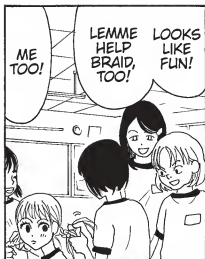
FALL
ASLEEP ON
THE TRAIN
AND MISS
YER STOP
AGAIN?

HEY, KOU,
WHAT
HAPPENED?



*a Shinto priest





ME TOO!

LEMME HELP BRAID, TOO!

LOOKS LIKE FUN!



MAIN SHRINE? I DON'T GET IT.

I BET HE KNOWS HOW TO HANDLE THE CURSE.

KOLI-CHAN'S UNCLE IS THE ONE WHO TAKES CARE OF THE MAIN SHRINE.

WELL, I GUESS THAT EXPLAINS WHY HE WASN'T AT THE BEACH.



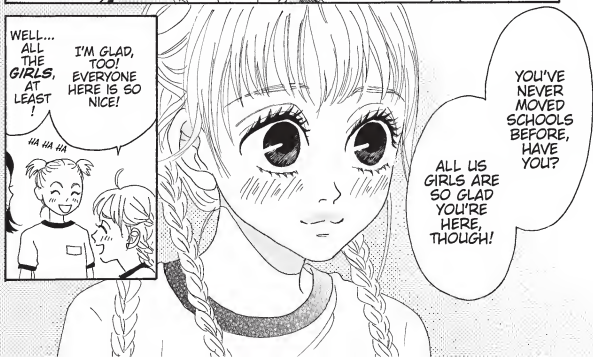
THIS WAS SUCH A GOOD IDEA!



OUR SCHOOL AIN'T GOT MORE'N ONE CLASS PER GRADE, SO WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOREVER!

IF ANYTHING'S TROUBLIN' YOU, JUST LET US KNOW, OKAY?

WELL? DO YA FEEL LIKE ONE OF US NOW?



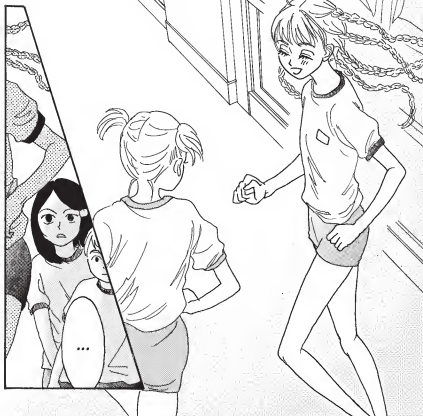
WELL... ALL THE GIRLS, AT LEAST!

I'M GLAD, TOO! EVERYONE HERE IS SO NICE!

HA HA HA

YOU'VE NEVER MOVED SCHOOLS BEFORE, HAVE YOU?

ALL US GIRLS ARE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE, THOUGH!



IT'S
THE
WARN-
ING
BELL!

DONG

タ

DANG

ゴ

ン

BETTER
HURRY!

DONG



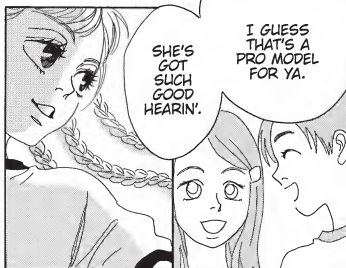
HER
HEAD'S
SUCH A
KOOKY
SHAPE,
THOUGH.

HA
HA!

SHE'S GOT
LONG LEGS,
THAT'S FOR
SURE.

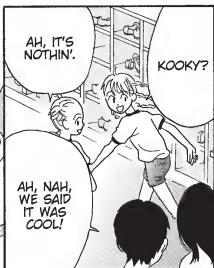
ホッ
WHISPER

ホッ
WHISPER



SHE'S GOT
SUCH
GOOD
HEARIN'.

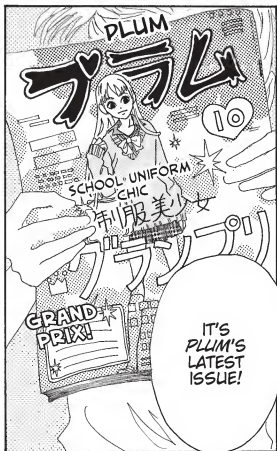
I GUESS
THAT'S A
PRO MODEL
FOR YA.



AH, IT'S
NOTHIN'.

KOOKY?

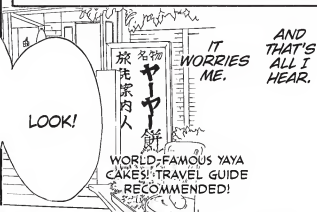
AH, NAH,
WE SAID
IT WAS
COOL!



THE SOUND
OF YOU
SAYING
"TOKYO" AND
"MODEL"
OVER AND
OVER
RESOLINDS
LOUD AND
CLEAR IN MY
SKULL.

YEAH,
I HEAR
YOU.

OH, IS IT
BAD THAT
I HAVE
GOOD
HEARING?



IT
WORRIES
ME.

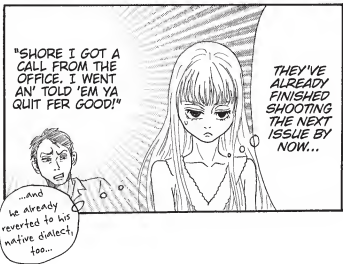
AND
THAT'S
ALL I
HEAR.



YOU'RE
ALWAYS
WEARIN'
SUCH CUTE
OUTFITS...

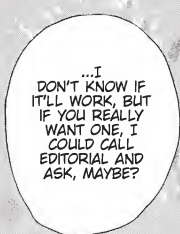
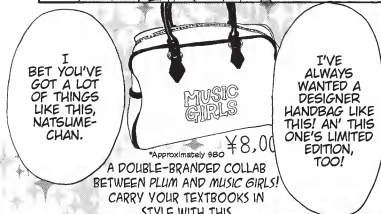


WOW,
NATSUME-
CHAN!
YOU'RE
ON THE
COVER?!



"SHORE I GOT A
CALL FROM THE
OFFICE. I WENT
AN' TOLD 'EM YA
QUIT FER GOOD!"

...and
he already
reverted to his
native dialect,
too...



PLEASE!
THEY ALL
REALLY
WANT
ONE!

BOOVING
10
10
10

But six?
You know
quantities
are
limited,
right?

CAN
YOU DO
IT?

Hey, in
exchange, if
you're ever
back in Tokyo,
come do a
shoot for us
again!

The office
just has you
on voluntary
suspension. We
haven't dropped
you from the
system or
anything!

But
this is
a one-
time-
only
thing,
got
it?

...okay.
I'll see
what
I can
do.

SORRY
FOR THE
TROUBLE!
THANK
YOU VERY
MUCH!

THAT
MEANS A
LOT TO
ME.

THANK
YOU...
VERY
MUCH.

...

Let's
work
together
again
soon!



YOU SHOULD
SPEND YOUR
WEEKENDS
HERE,
WITH YOUR
FRIENDS!

WHAT?!
YOU WANNA
COMMUTE TO
TOKYO ON THE
WEEKENDS
FOR WORK?!

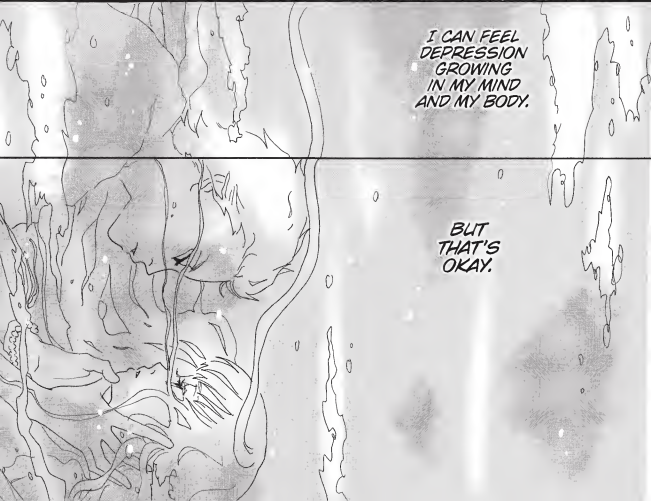


I'LL FIND
A WAY TO
SURVIVE
HERE
SOMEHOW.
EVENTU-
ALLY, I'LL
GO NATIVE.

SURE.

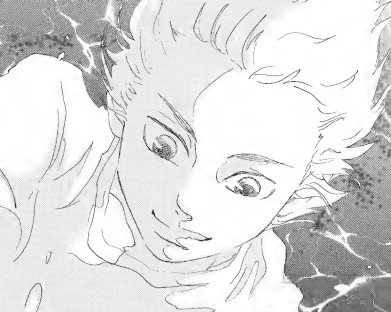
I
THOUGHT
YOU'D
SAY
THAT.

SURE,
FINE.

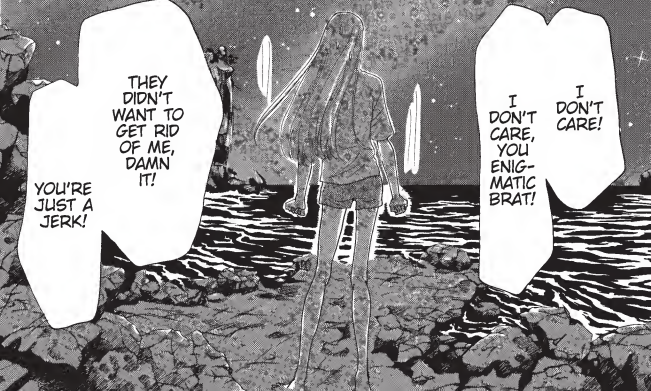


I CAN FEEL
DEPRESSION
GROWING
IN MY MIND
AND MY BODY.

BUT
THAT'S
OKAY.



THERE'S
SOMETHING THAT
DAZZLES ME
MORE THAN THE
FLASH OF THE
CAMERA.



YOU'RE
JUST A
JERK!

THEY
DIDN'T
WANT TO
GET RID
OF ME,
DAMN
IT!

I
DON'T
CARE, YOU
ENIG-
MATIC
BRAT!

I
DON'T
CARE!

WHOA!

MUSIC
GIRLS

AH... I
WISH I
COULD SAY
IT TO HIS
FACE.

IF YOU ASK
NATSUME-
CHAN, SHE
CAN GET
YOU ONE!

THEY'RE
LIMITED
EDITION,
AIN'T THEY?

OH,
WHAT'S
THIS?
THAT'S
NICE.

THANKS
SO MUCH,
NATSUME-
CHAN!

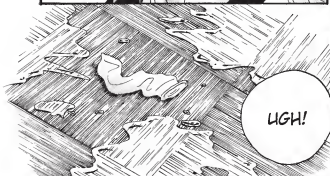


IF
I ASK
FOR
MORE,
THEY'LL
CRUCIFY
ME!

S-
SORRY,
I
CAN'T!

OH,
REALLY?
THEN...







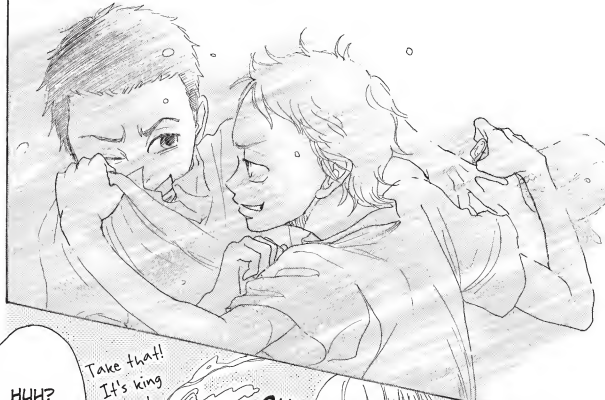
THE
WHOLE
HALLWAY'S
FLOODED!

WHOA!

OUR
LUNCH
BAGS'RE
SOAKED
THROUGH!

YOU
AIN'T
KIDDIN'!





HUH?
WHAT'RE
YOU
SAYIN'?

They're just
a buncha
show-offs!

Take that!
It's king
size!

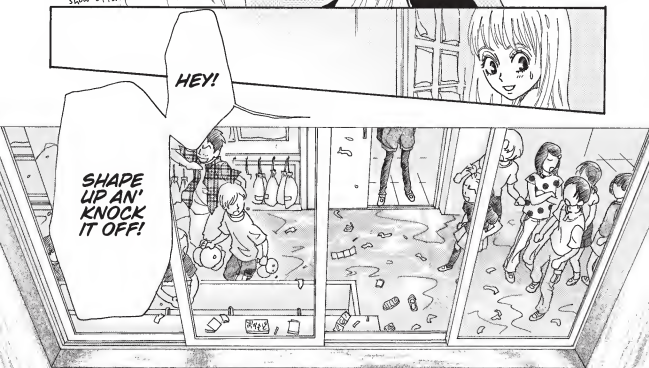
GYA
HA
HA!

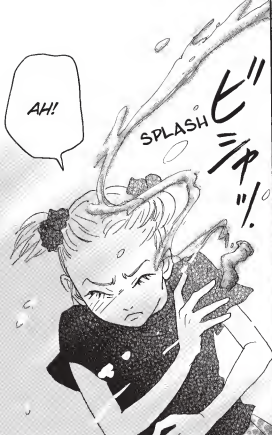
Aww!

LOOKS
LIKE
THEY'RE
HAVING
FUN...

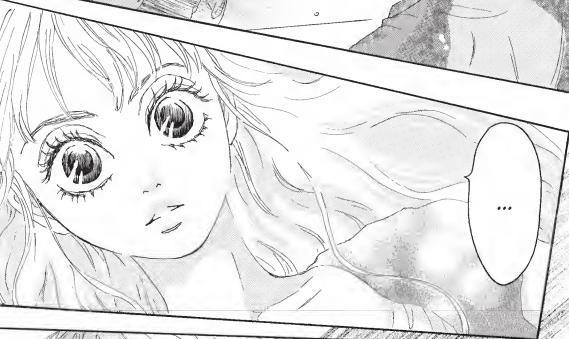
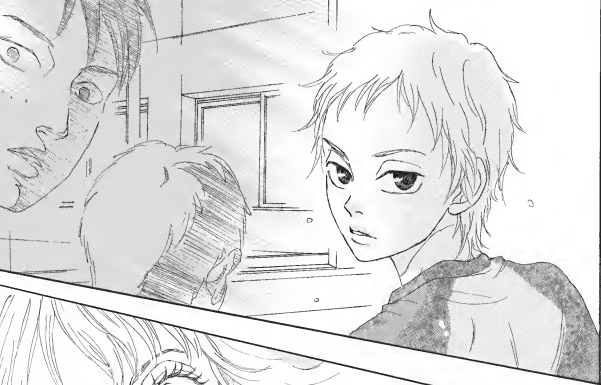
HEY!

SHAPE
UP AN'
KNOCK
IT OFF!

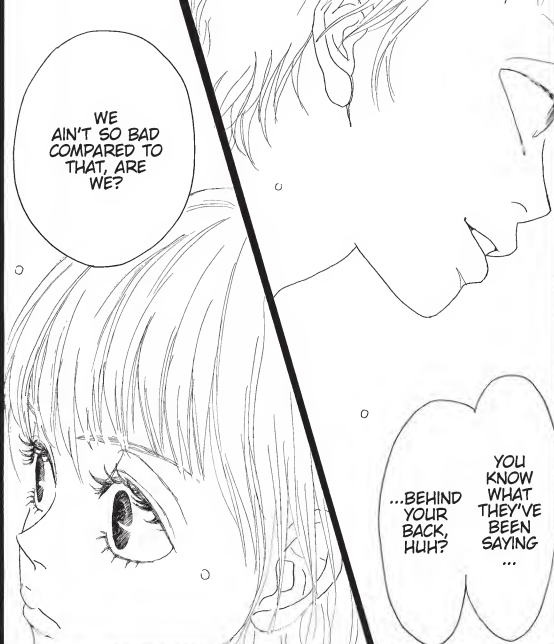












WE
AIN'T SO BAD
COMPARED TO
THAT, ARE
WE?

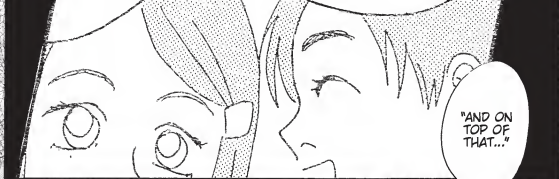
...BEHIND
YOUR
BACK,
HUH?

YOU
KNOW
WHAT
THEY'VE
BEEN
SAYING
...

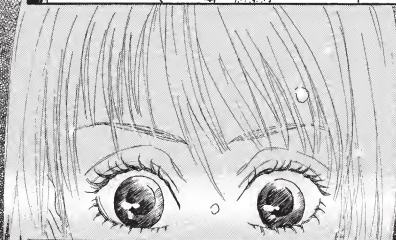


THEY
SAY STUFF LIKE,
"LOOK WHAT CAME
OUTTA THE TOKYO
SMOG" AN' "FOR A
MODEL, SHE SURE
AIN'T VERY CUTE."

AH...



"AND ON
TOP OF
THAT..."



"...SHE JUST
WANTS TO
MAKE FUN OF
US COUNTRY
GALS!"



"THAT
FANCY
TOKYO-
SPEAK
IS SO
IRRI-
TATIN'!"

YOU'RE
ONE TO
TALK, YA
TWO-FACED
FOX!

WHADDAYA THINK
YOU'RE SAYING?!
NOW YOU'RE
REALLY MAKIN'
ME MAD!

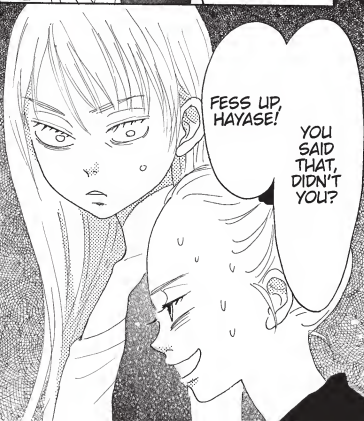


HEY,
KOU...

LOOKIT
THAT
KOOKY
FACE O'
HERS!

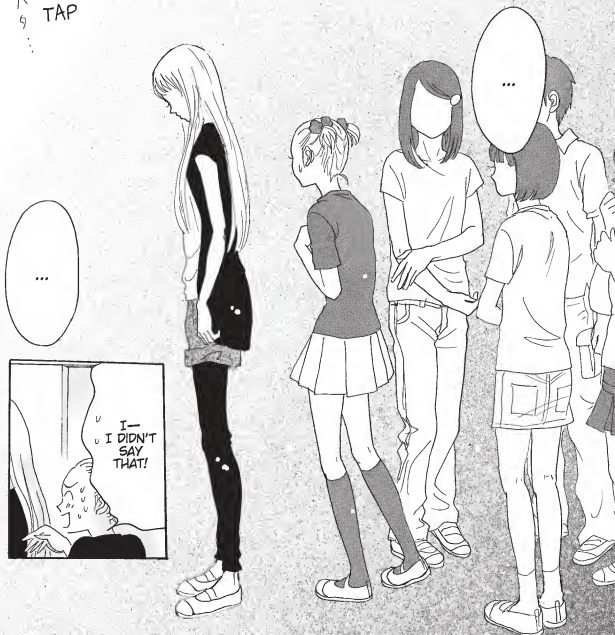
IT AIN'T
REALLY
THAT
FUNNY...

HA
HA
HA
HA
HA!



FESS UP,
HAYASE!

YOU
SAID
THAT,
DIDN'T
YOU?



HER
HEAD'S
SUCH A
KOOKY
SHAPE,
THOUGH.

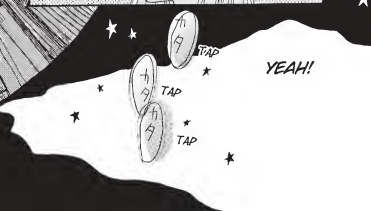
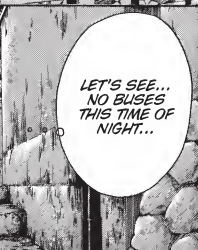
I GUESS
IT MEANS
"WEIRD" OR
"STRANGE."

"KOOKY"...

UH-
HUH...

I SEE
HOW IT
IS.

WHY IS IT
I HAVE TO
BE HERE
AGAIN...?



YEAH!

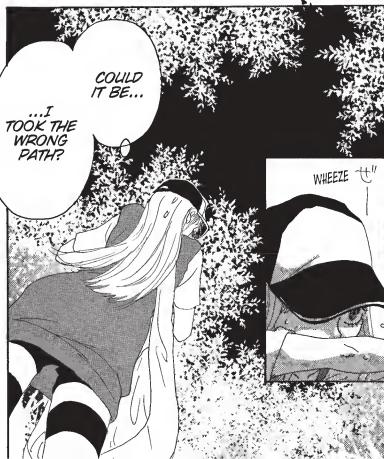


IT
JUST
LEADS
STRAIGHT
UP THE
MOUN-
TAIN!

THIS
ISN'T
MUCH
OF A
HIKING
TRAIL.

YOU
KNOW...

I
CAN'T
GET
WHAT I
DESIRED
OUT-
SIDE
OF
TOKYO.



...I
TOOK THE
WRONG
PATH?

COULD
IT BE...



WHEEZE



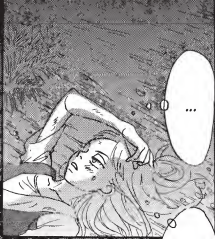
IT JUST
KEEPS
CLIMBING
...

WHEEZE





"A TREE
WILL
PROBABLY
FALL ON
ME NEXT."



...

IS THIS
THE
CURSE?

THAT BOY
REALLY
DOES HAVE
A TWISTED
PERSONALITY.

"OUTSIDER."

HE'S
SHORTER
THAN ME...

HE GETS
WORSE
GRADES
THAN ME...





FLUMP

EEP!

WHAT ...

...WAS THAT?

MY LEG HAS...

AAH!

ZOOP

SHAKE

YA
DUMMY!

NOO!
NOOO!

SHAKE

THERE'S
A CLIFF
THERE!
LOOK!

WHAT A
KOOKY PLACE
FER US TO
MEET.

I-!

WH-!

THIS
AIN'T
LUCKY
AT
ALL!

YOU'RE
A LUCKY
ONE!

HEY,
LOOK, IT'S
A WHITE
SNAKE.

AAH!

WIGGLE

YOU
BEEN
CRYIN'?

WHAT'S
THIS?

HEY!
THAT
HURTS!

What the
heck?!

GRAB

IT'S YOUR
FAULT I'M
SUFFERING!

DON'T COME
THIS WAY
AT NIGHT IF
YOU'RE JUST
GONNA CRY.

ぶわ GUSH

...



HA
HA
HA!

SO YOU
RAN AWAY,
HUH?

SO
JUST
TAKE ME
TO THE
STATION,
AND I'LL
GO!

I'M
JUST AN
OUTSIDER,
RIGHT?
WELL, I'M
GOING
BACK TO
TOKYO!



TREES
ARE
NOTHING
TO BE
PROUD
OF!

YOU BACK-
COUNTRY
HICK!

YA
THINK?

WE GOT
THESE
HUGE
TREES
THOUGH.

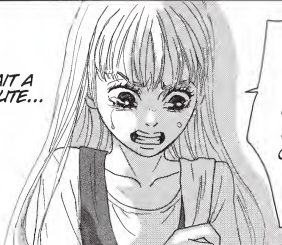
YOU'RE
TERRIBLE!
THIS WHOLE
PLACE IS
TERRIBLE!

WHAT'S
FUNNY
ABOUT
THAT?!



THERE AREN'T
ANY CLOTHING
BOUTIQUES
AT ALL!
EVEN YOUR
CONVENIENCE
STORES
CLOSE BY
10 PM!

YEAH,
THAT'S
RIGHT! I'M
LOOKING
DOWN ON
YOU!



WAIT A
MINUTE...

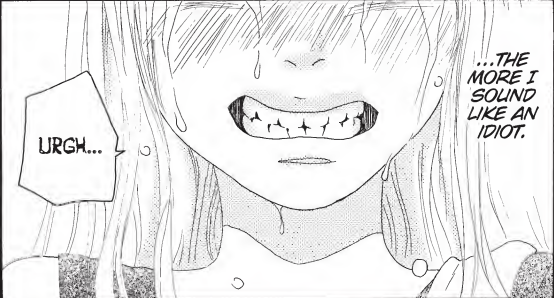
I NEVER
KNEW
COUNTRY
FOLK
WERE SO
OUTRIGHT
MEAN!

EVEN WHEN I
THOUGHT I'D
FOUND GOOD
PEOPLE, THEY
SAID AWFUL
THINGS BEHIND
MY BACK!



YEAH,
I'M AN
OUTSIDER!
I NEVER
WANT TO BE
ONE OF YOU
LINCOOL
PEOPLE!

THE MORE
I SAY...



URGH...

...THE
MORE I
SOUND
LIKE AN
IDIOT.

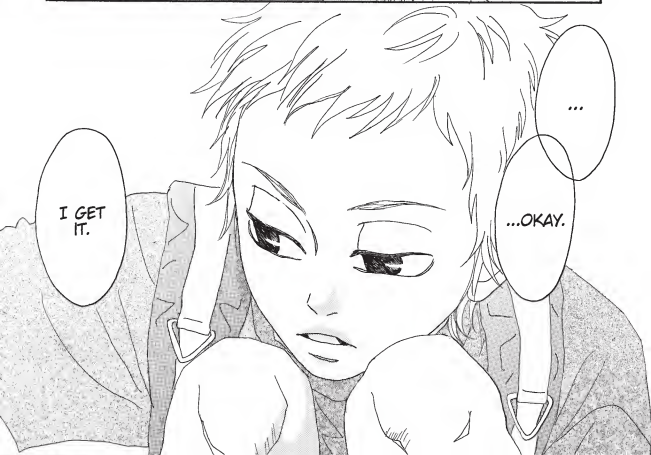
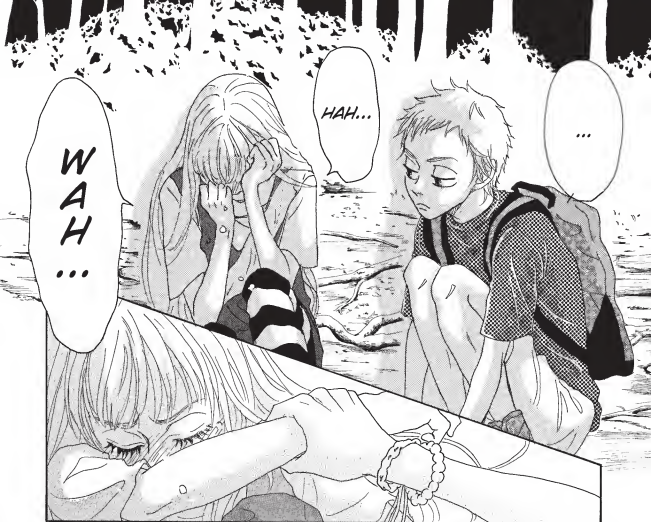


I
HATE
IT! I
HATE
IT! I
JUST
HATE
IT!

W
A
A
H!

W
A
A
H!

W
A
A
H!





YOU'RE
HUNGRY,
RIGHT?



SO
YOU'RE
THE
HUNGRY
ONE!

WELL,
I'M
EATING.

I got
these
seven-
ingredient
rice
balls...



WAAH!

AND ANYWAY,
THANKS TO
ALL YOUR
BAD-MOUTHING
REPORTS,
I LOST MY
APPETITE!

WHAT
THE
HELL?!
OF
COURSE
NOT!

ARE YOU
STUPID
OR SOME-
THING?!

IZZAT
SO.



HERE.

SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF

...MAY
I?



SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF

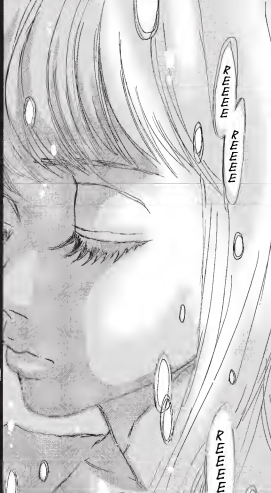
One
more.

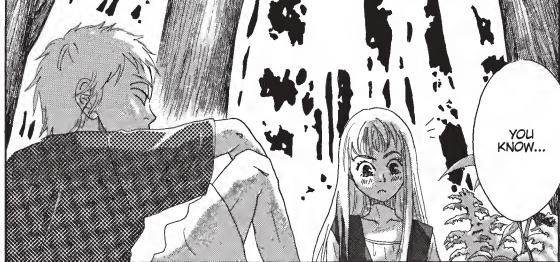


SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF

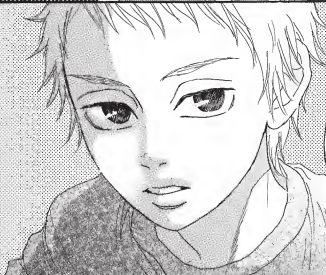
WGH...

CHWEN
CHWEN





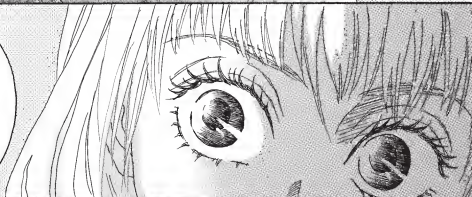
YOU
KNOW...



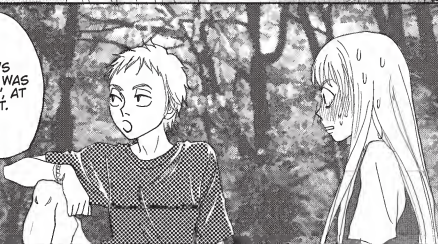
WHAT THEY
SAY DON'T
CHANGE
THE FACT
THAT YOU'RE
PRETTY.

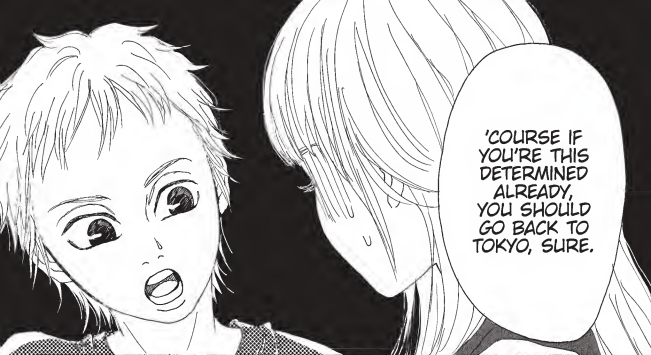
MAYBE THE
BAD-MOUTHIN'
HURTS NOW,
BUT I STILL
THINK YOU
COULD GET
USED TO
LIVIN' HERE.

AIN'T THAT
ENOUGH?



THAT'S
WHAT I WAS
THINKIN', AT
LEAST.





'COURSE IF
YOU'RE THIS
DETERMINED
ALREADY,
YOU SHOULD
GO BACK TO
TOKYO, SURE.



But, um,
what
about—

W
H
A
T
?!



I'LL RUN
AWAY
WITH YOU.

THAT WAS
A REAL
SHARP
TURN-
AROUND
JUST NOW...



WH-
WHAT?!
ARE YOU
SERIOUS
?!

C'MON,
LET'S
GO!

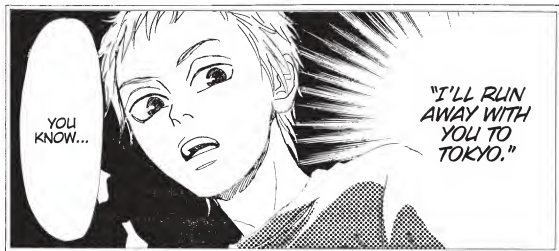
THE KANNUSHI
JUST PUSHES ME
AROUND AND DON'T
GIVE ME ENOUGH
FOOD, NEITHER. I
CAN'T STAND IT.

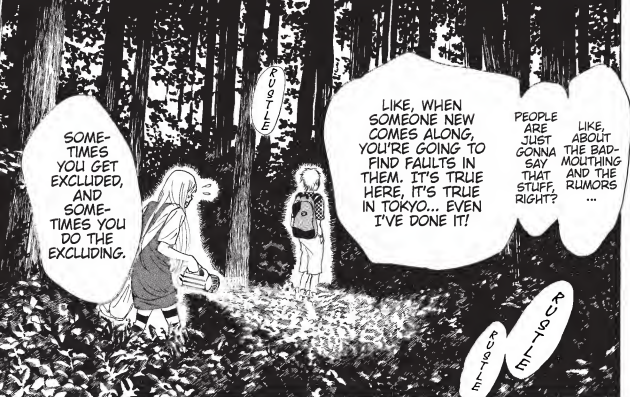
3

Bonds

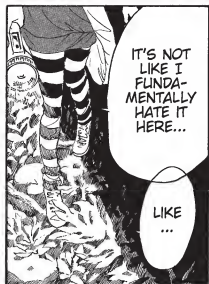
GOAT







...I MEAN...





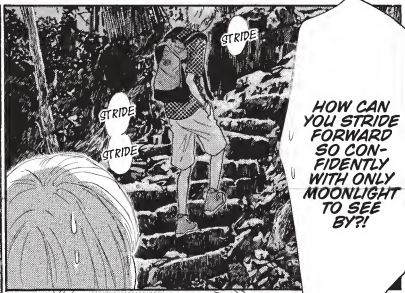
I
MEAN...

"WHAT THEY
SAY DON'T
CHANGE
THE FACT
THAT YOU'RE
PRETTY."



THIS
MOUNTAIN'S
MY TERRITORY,
TOO.

HUH?



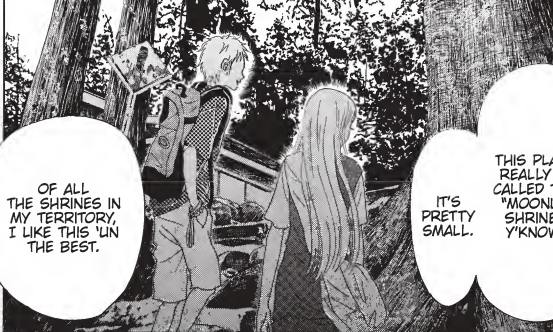
STRIDE

STRIDE

STRIDE

HOW CAN
YOU STRIDE
FORWARD
SO CON-
FIDENTLY
WITH ONLY
MOONLIGHT
TO SEE
BY?!





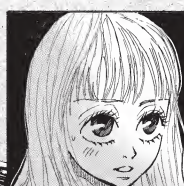
OF ALL
THE SHRINES IN
MY TERRITORY,
I LIKE THIS 'UN
THE BEST.

IT'S
PRETTY
SMALL.

THIS PLACE
REALLY IS
CALLED THE
"MOONLIT
SHRINE."
Y'KNOW.

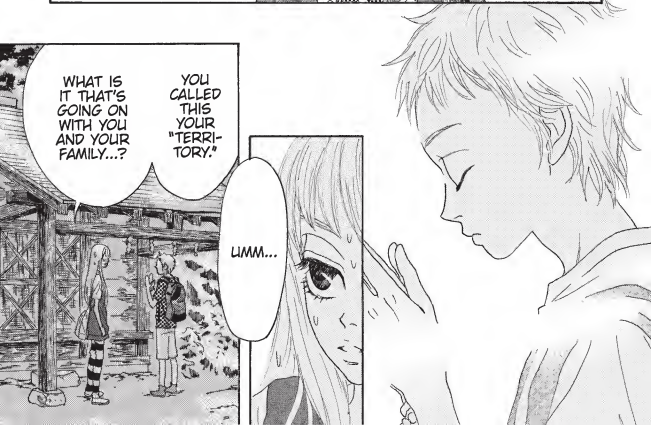
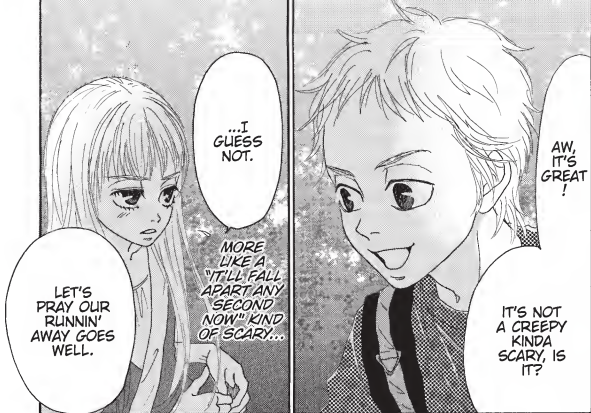


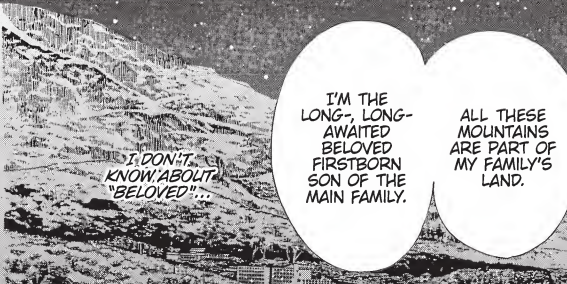
IT
LOOKS
A LITTLE
SCARY,
TOO.



IT IS
PRETTY
SMALL,

YEAH.





I DON'T
KNOW ABOUT
"BELOVED"...

I'M THE
LONG-, LONG-
AWAITED
BELOVED
FIRSTBORN
SON OF THE
MAIN FAMILY.

ALL THESE
MOUNTAINS
ARE PART OF
MY FAMILY'S
LAND.

KOLI-
CHAN'S
UNCLE
IS THE
ONE WHO
TAKES
CARE OF
THE MAIN
SHRINE.

...AND EVEN
THE BRANCH
FAMILY TOOK
THE ROLE OF
KANNUSHI...

THE
SPOILED
BRAT FROM
THE HOUSE
WITH THE
STONE
WALL.

...BUT
IF THE
FAMILY
USED
TO BE
LORDS
HERE
AND
HAVE
KEPT THE
LAND
FOR
GENERATIONS...

EVEN THE
ARROGANT
THINGS HE
SAID...

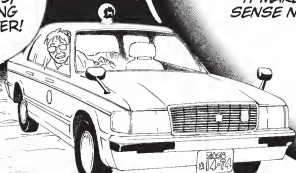
I CAN GO
ANYWHERE I
WANT ON THE
MOUNTAIN OR
IN THE SEA.

WHEN
YOU SUMMONED
ME IN THE MIDDLE
OF THE NIGHT, I
DIDN'T EXPECT
YOU TO BE WITH
SUCH A BEAUTIFUL
YOUNG GIRL!

MY
GOOD-
NESS,
YOUNG
MASTER!

BEEP
7
BEEP
7

IT'S ALL
CONNECTED.
IT MAKES
SENSE NOW.





HA HA
HA!

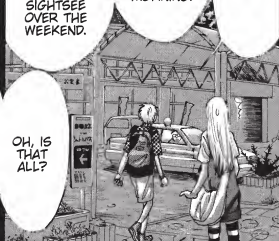
I
THOUGHT
FOR SURE
YOU TWO
WERE
ELOPING!
HA
HA
HA
HA

SINCE
YOU'RE
GOIN'
ANYWAY, I
THOUGHT
I'D COME
SIGHTSEE
OVER THE
WEEKEND.

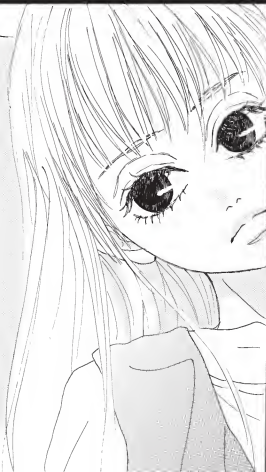
SOMETHIN'
CAME UP,
AND SHE'S
GOTTA GET
BACK BY
MORNING.

SHE'S A
COUSIN
FROM
TOKYO.

OH, IS
THAT
ALL?



7
ROOM



SNORE

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
THE
RUSE
WORKED.



I
WONDER
IF WE
HAVE
ENOUGH
MONEY?

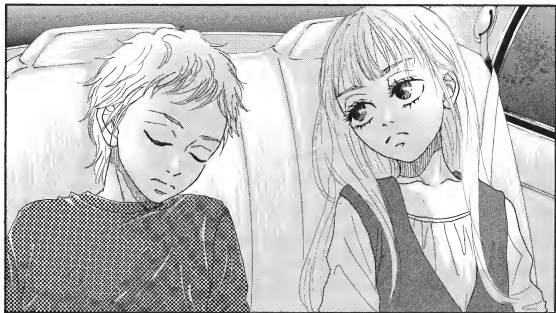
THE DRIVER
EVEN CALLED
HIM "YOUNG
MASTER"...



...

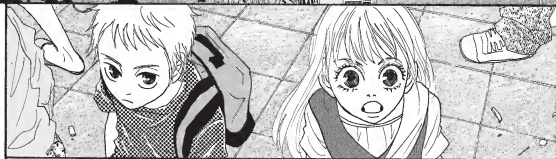
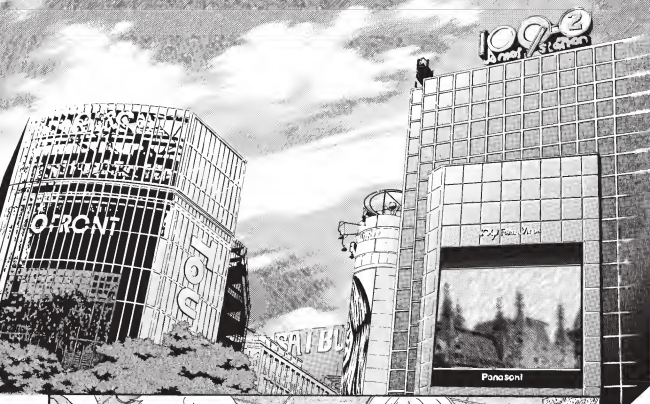
IT'S ALL
CONNECTED.

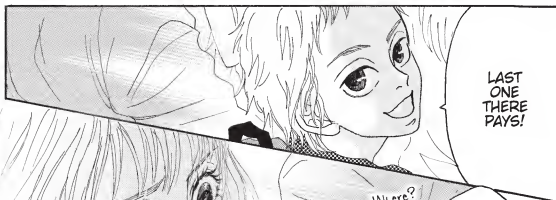
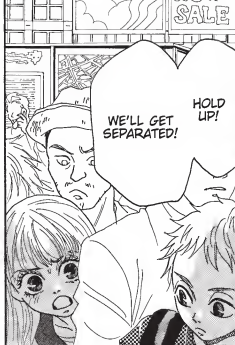
THE BOY
WATCHES OVER
AND PROTECTS
THIS LAND...



...THEN I'D LIKE
TO SEE HOW HE
LOOKS OUTSIDE
HIS TERRITORY,
HERE IN TOKYO.

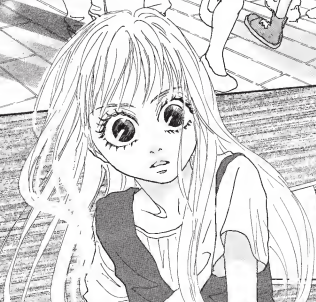
IF THAT'S THE
REASON IT
LOOKS LIKE
HE GLOWS...







WHOA...



IT'S JUST
LIKE
BEFORE...



...AS IF
HE WERE
SWIMMING
...

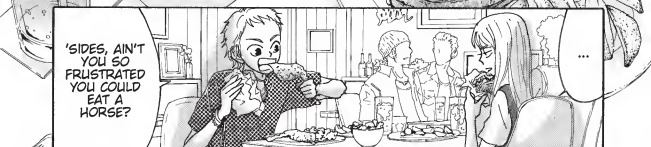
HE'S
SLIDING
THROUGH
...





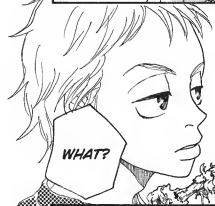
YOU LOST. YA
DON'T GET TO
COMPLAIN.

YOU
EXPECT
ME TO
PAY FOR
ALL OF
THIS?!



'SIDES, AIN'T
YOU SO
FRUSTRATED
YOU COULD
EAT A
HORSE?

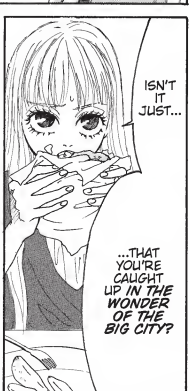
...



WHAT?

AND I
SAW 'EM
WANDERING
AROUND.

MAYBE
SO, BUT
TRUTH IS,
I GOT A
RELATIVE
HERE,



ISN'T
IT
JUST...



WHAT,
WERE YA
HOPIN' TO
SEE ME ALL
FLUSTERED?

IS THAT
ALL? HOW
BORING!

...THAT
YOU'RE
CAUGHT
UP IN THE
WONDER
OF THE
BIG CITY?

SO,
HEY...

I WAS
THINKIN'
I MIGHT
WANT TO
SEE YOU
DOIN' SOME
MODELING.

MAYBE
I WAS
EXPECT-
ING TO.

MAYBE
I WAS
HOPING
TO.

...

I WANT
YOU TO
IMPRESS
ME.

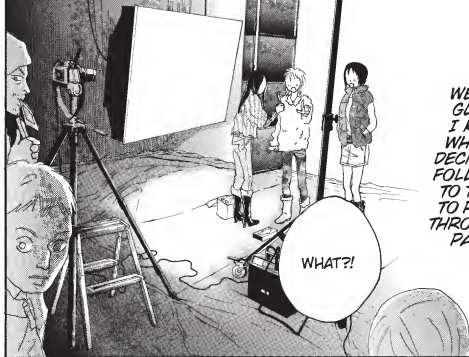
DOING
THE JOB
YOU
LOVE.

I WANNA
SEE YOU
IN THE CITY
YOU LOVE,

HUH?

WHAT?

MAYBE
THEN
YOU'LL
GET ME
FLUSTERED.



WELL, I
GUESS
I KNOW
WHY YOU
DECIDED TO
FOLLOW ME
TO TOKYO.
TO PUT ME
THROUGH MY
PACES.

WHAT?!



OH!

CHATTER

CAN I
?!

YOU
SHOULD
TOTALLY
JOIN IN!



SORRY
TO DROP
IN SO
SUDDENLY!



NATSU-
ME-
CHAN?!

WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?!

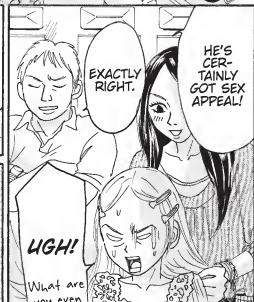
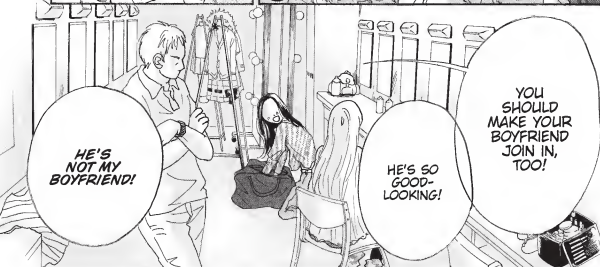


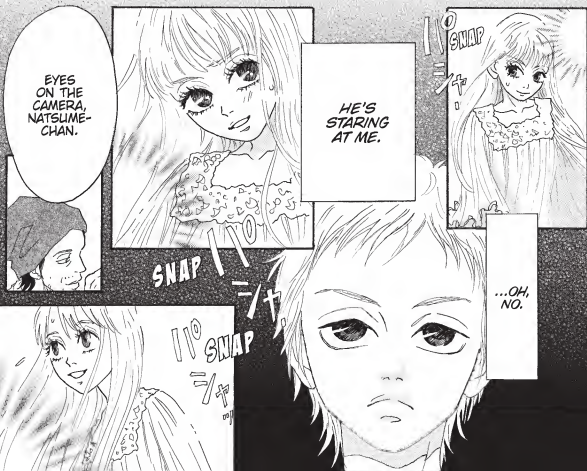
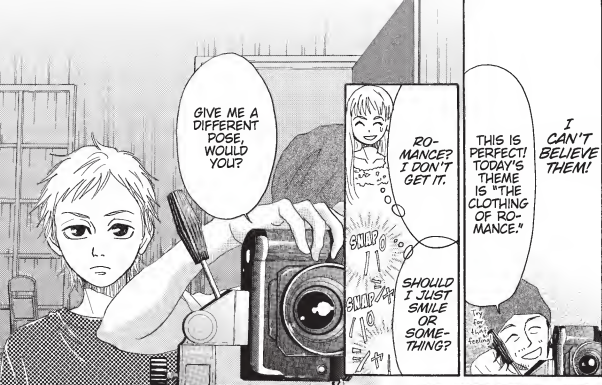
HOWDY,
Y'ALL.

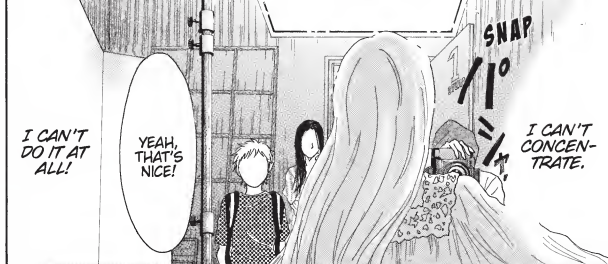
UM,

BY THE
WAY, MY
CLASSMATE
CAME TO
OBSERVE.

...for some
reason.







I CAN'T
DO IT AT
ALL!

YEAH,
THAT'S
NICE!

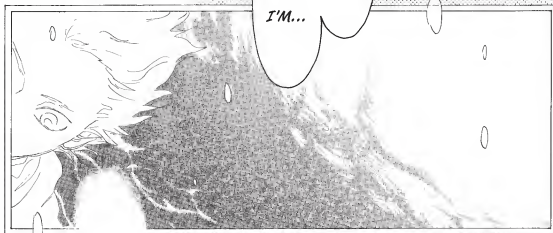
SNAP
/ 1°
=

I CAN'T
CONCENT-
RATE.



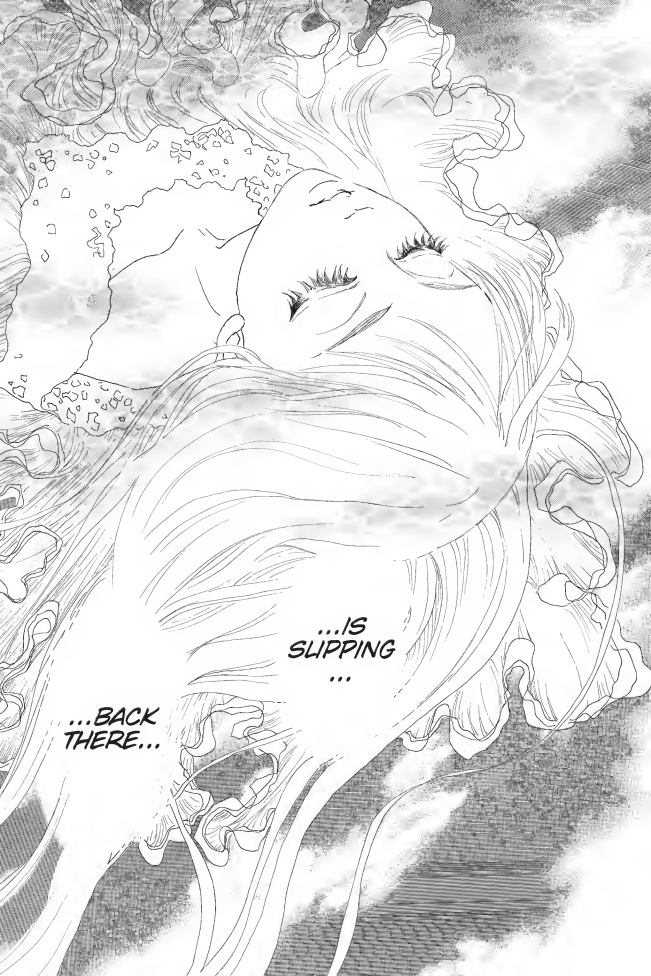
OH,
NO...

I'M...



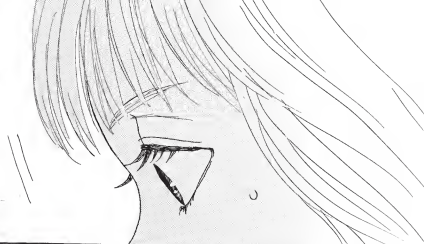
MY
MIND...



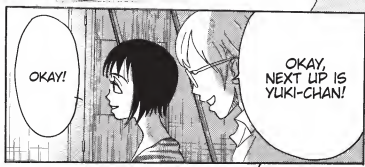


...IS
SLIPPING
...

...BACK
THERE...



OKAY,
THAT'S
GOOD!



OKAY!

OKAY,
NEXT UP IS
YUKI-CHAN!



YEP!

IS ...HUH?
THAT
ALL?



SORRY
TO
WASTE
YOUR
TIME.

...I GET
IT. THEY
CAN'T
TAKE
PHOTOS
IF I CAN'T
CONCENTRATE.



UM,
SURE.

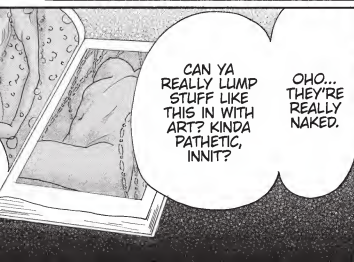
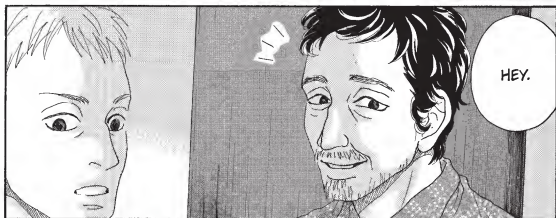


NATSUME-
CHAN, LET'S
HAVE YOU DO
ONE MORE
OUTFIT!



WHAT DO
YOU MEAN,
DOI-SAN?

...





OH, I
SEE.

I GET IT.
THEY'RE
PRETTY
NICE.



YOU'RE A
FUN ONE.

EVERY ONE
OF THOSE
GIRLS STRIPPED
BECAUSE THEY
WANTED TO BE
SHOT BY THE
FAMOUS HIRONO-
SAN, YOU KNOW!



JUST STAY
AWAY FROM
NATSUME

SHE'S
MINE.

SORRY,
I CAN'T.

...

THE
LAST
TRAIN
HOME IS
SOON.

WELL...

HM?

WHAT'S
UP?

...SOME-
WHERE
ALONG
THE WAY,
THINGS
CHANGED.

BUT...

I WAS
ACCEPTED,
AND MODEL-
ING TURNED
OUT TO BE
MORE FUN
THAN I EVER
IMAGINED...

MY
FRIENDS
FROM
SCHOOL
AND I ALL
APPLIED
TOGETHER.

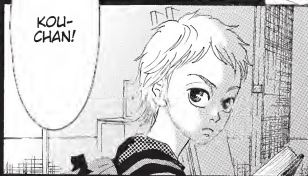
I HAVE
TO HEAD
HOME.





I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT
"MORE"
IS. I
DON'T
KNOW
HOW TO
GET IT.

KOU-
CHAN!



MAYBE
THIS
ISN'T
IT...



IT'S NOT
ENOUGH.

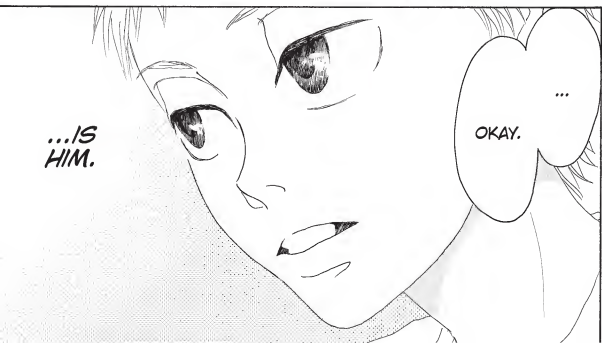
I WANT
MORE!
MORE!



...BUT
WHAT I
WANT
NOW...

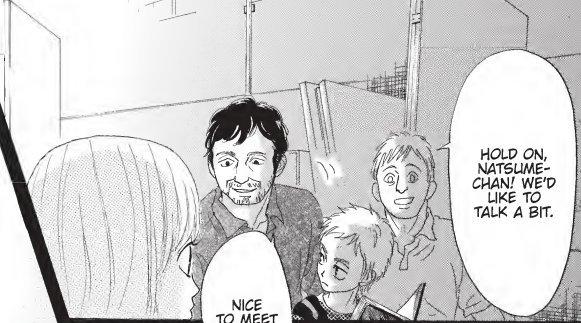
I'M
SATISFIED
NOW.

LET'S
GO
HOME.



...IS
HIM.

...
OKAY.



HOLD ON,
NATSUME-
CHAN! WE'D
LIKE TO
TALK A BIT.



NICE
TO MEET
YOU.



THANKS
FOR LET-
TING ME
OBSERVE
TODAY.



WHO
IS HE?

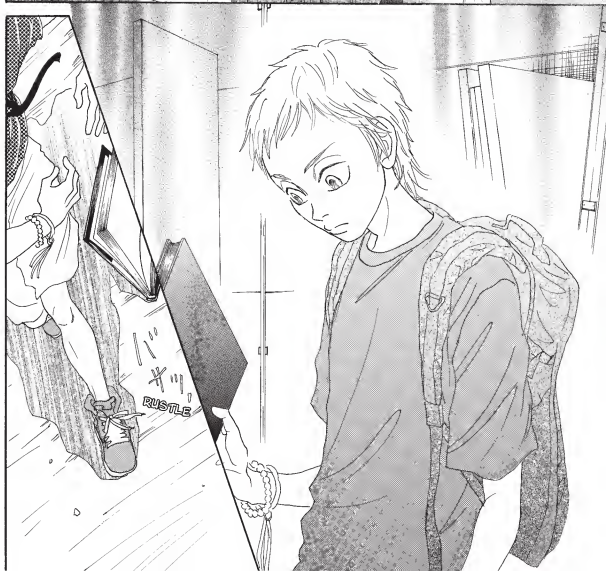
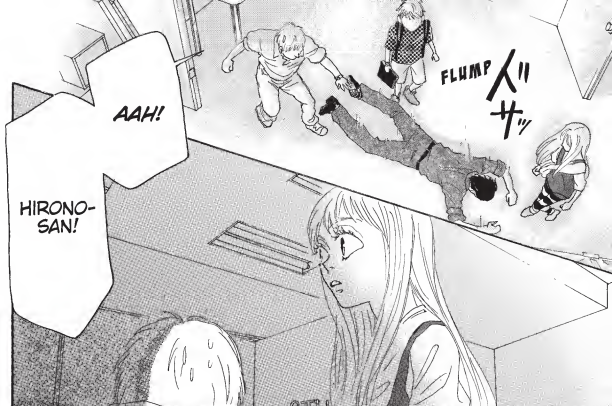


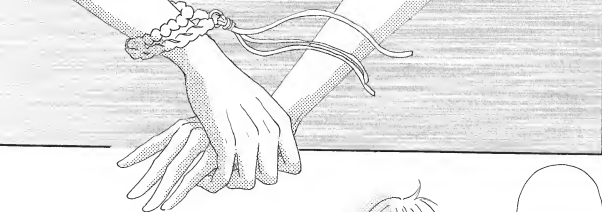
YOU'RE
ONLY 12?



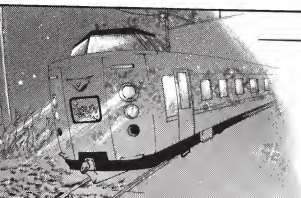
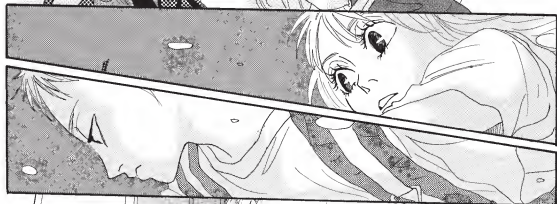
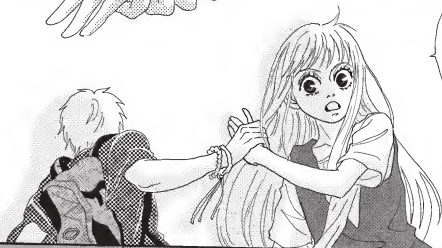
YOU HAVE
A MATURE
AIR ABOUT
YOU.







HUH?



IT FEELS
ALMOST
LIKE WE
ELOPED
AFTER ALL.

HA HA
HA!

HEY! SAY
SOMETHING!
DON'T JUST
IGNORE ME!

AND WHY
DID YOU
ATTACK
THAT GUY,
ANYWAY?!

...

THAT
HURT!

HEY!

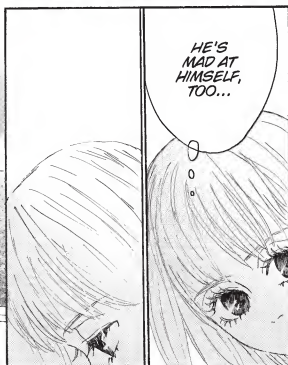
ク
シ ヽ ヽ ヽ
NUDGE

NO
REASON.

ク
シ ヽ ヽ ヽ
STOMP

...PISSED
ME OFF,
IS ALL.

THAT
OLD GUY
JUST...

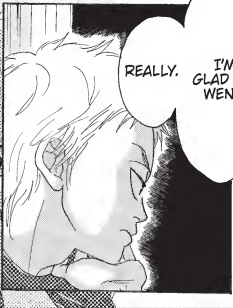




I GUESS
I NEVER
GOT TO
IMPRESS
YOU,
THOUGH.

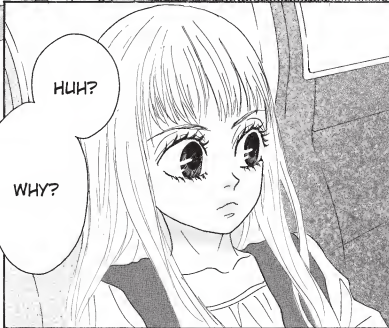
I'M
FRUSTRATED
THAT I KEEP
COMING UP
SHORT IN
OUR BETS.

THANKS
FOR
COMING
WITH ME.



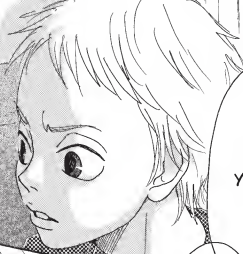
REALLY.

I'M
GLAD WE
WENT.

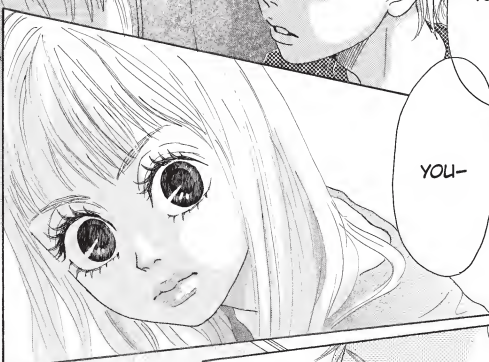


HUH?

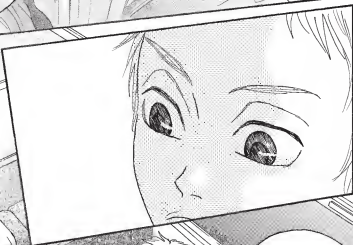
WHY?



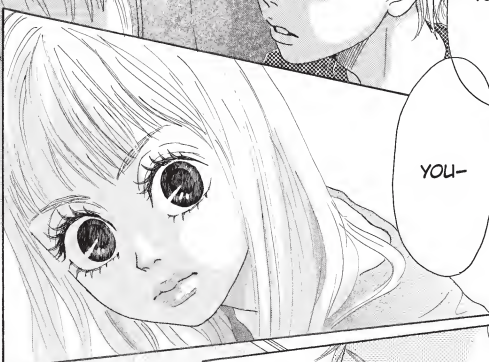
DON'T
YOU GET
IT?



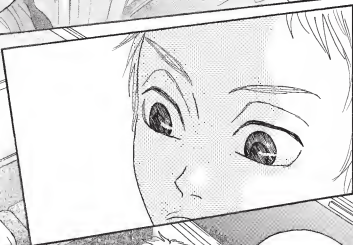
YOU-



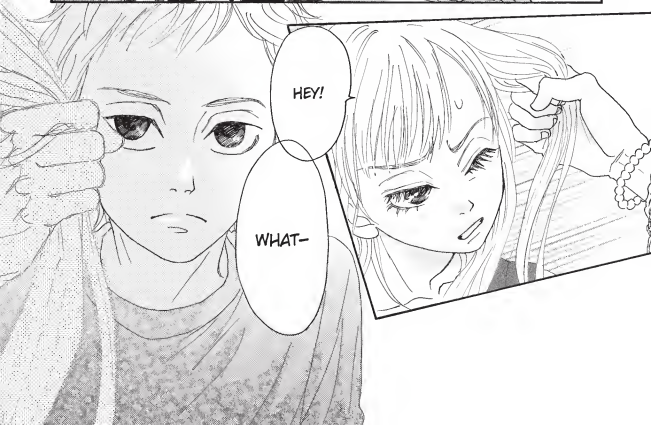
HUH? UM,
YES, FOR
THE PHOTO-
SHOOT...

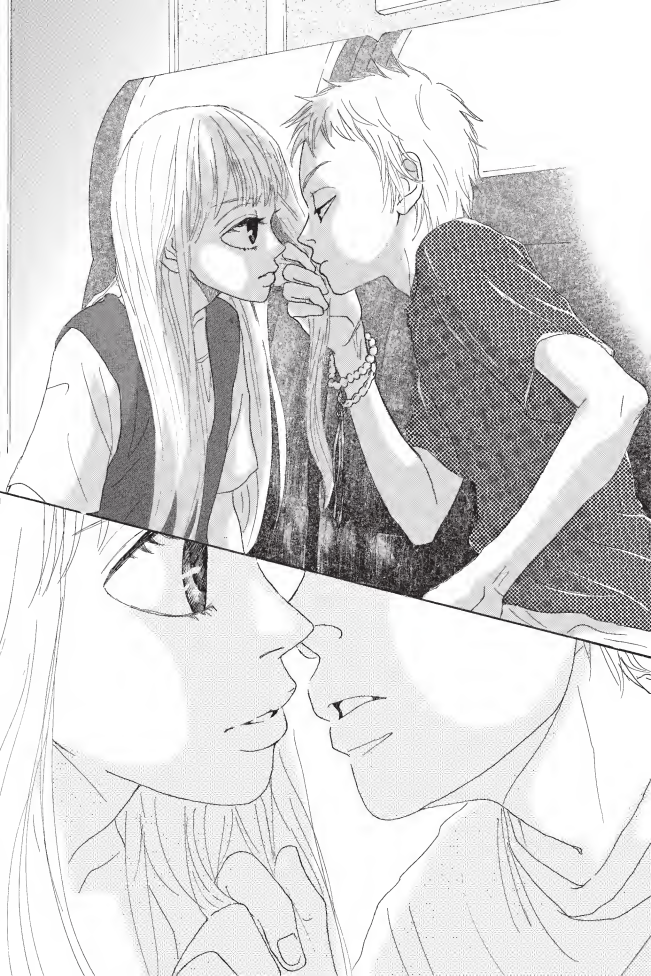


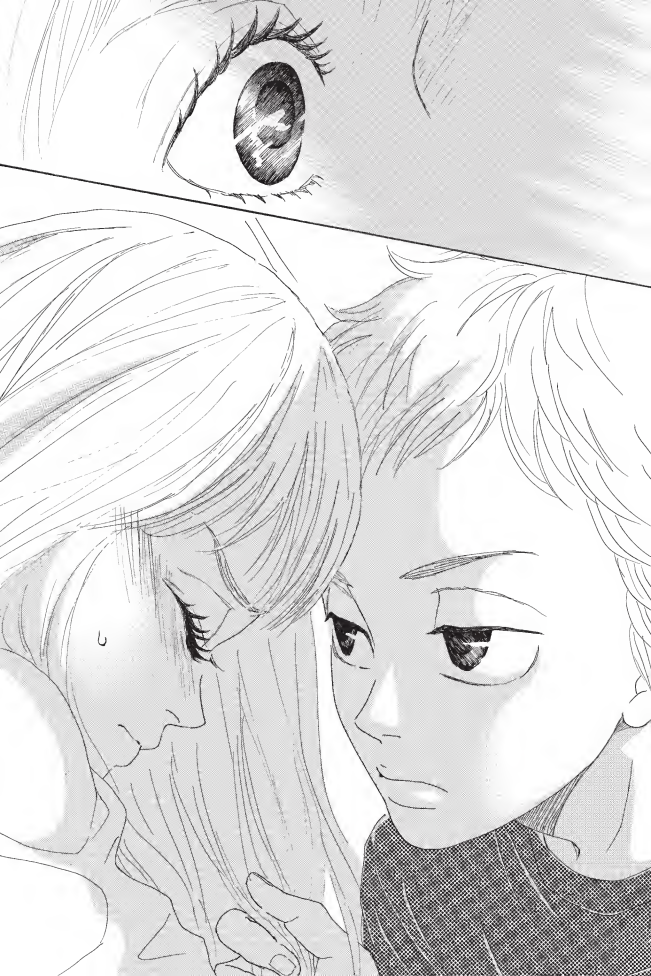
WAIT. WHAT
WERE YOU
ABOUT TO
SAY?

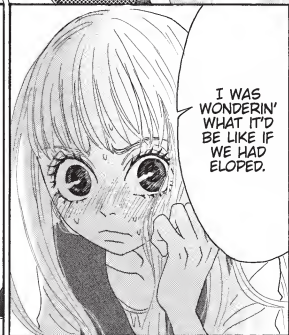


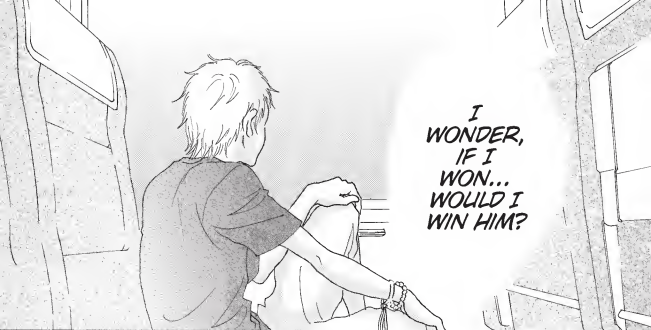
...ARE YOU
WEARIN'
MAKEUP?











I
WONDER,
IF I
WON...
WOULD I
WIN HIM?

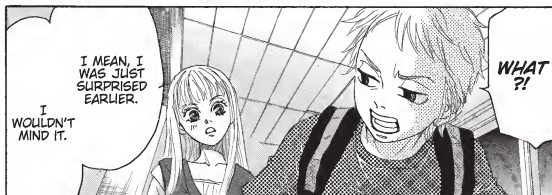


I WONDER
WHAT THIS
URGE I
HAVE IS
CALLED...

4

Impatience





WHAT'S
THIS I
HEAR
ABOUT
ELOPING
?!

UGH!

CRACK

SLAP

WHAT'S
THIS I
HEAR
ABOUT
MODEL-
ING?!

BUH!

HOW
DARE
YOU
DRAG
THIS
GIRL
INTO IT,
TOO!

WHAM

YOU'RE
ALWAYS
MESSING
AROUND!

THE EDITOR
AT THAT
PLUM
MAGAZINE
OF YOURS
PHONED AND
TOLD US
YOU WERE
THERE!

You
hit me
?!

I
DON'T
BE-
LIEVE
THIS!

YOU
LITTLE-!

SHACK

BAM

OH,
NO.
LIKE-
WISE.

VERY
SORRY.

We're
leaving!

THIS MAN
IS THE
KANNUSHI
?

NATSUME.

NOT
HIS DAD
AFTER
ALL,
HUH?

SO HE'S
KOU-
CHAN'S
UNCLE...

OH, I IMAGINE
YOU HAVE
IT TOUGH
RUNNING THE
HINEMOSU INN,
ALSO!

AS A
KANNUSHI,
YOU MUST
BE SO BUSY
PREPARING
FOR THE
LIPCOMING
FESTIVAL...



BUT
I AIN'T
GONNA LET
YA DO IT
NOW. EVEN
IF YER MA
SAYS IT'S
OKAY!

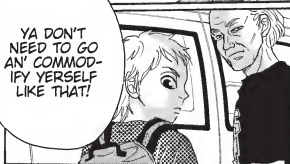


YOU COME TO
ME AFTER YOU
GRADUATE HIGH
SCHOOL, AN' IF YOU
STILL WANNA DO
MODELING, TRY TO
CONVINCE ME.

I
MIGHT
JUST
LET YA.



KIDS
LIKE YOU
SHOULD
ENJOY
THEIR
YOUTH.



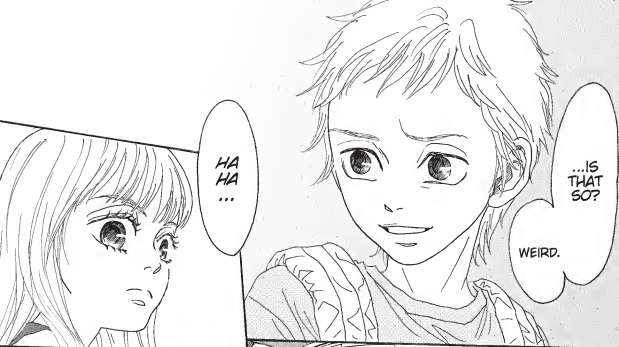
YA DON'T
NEED TO GO
AN' COMMOD-
IFY YERSELF
LIKE THAT!



WHAT'S
THIS,
MISTER?

KO-
ICHIRO!

YOU DON'T
APPROVE
OF NATSUME
MODELIN'?



HA
HA
...

...IS
THAT
SO?

WEIRD.

KOU-CHAN?



...NATSU-
ME.



I
WONDER
WHY?

HE LOOKED KIND
OF LIKE HE WAS
BAFFLED AND A
LITTLE RELIEVED...

THUS
CAME
THE
ABRUPT
END TO
RUNNING
AWAY.

DAD, WE
JUST GOT
STUCK WITH
EACH OTHER
DUE TO A
SERIES OF
UNFORTUNATE
CIRCUM-
STANCES!

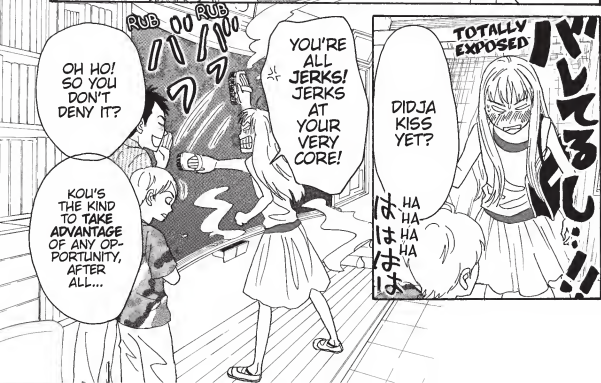
ARE
YOU
SERIOUS
?!

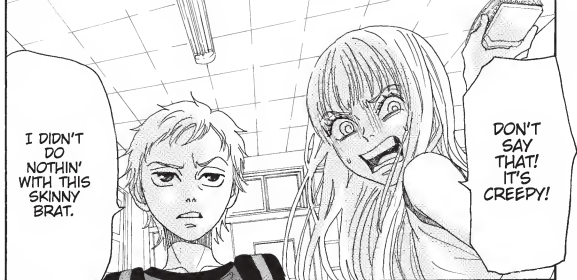
DATING
IS ALSO
OFF-LIMITS
UNTIL
AFTER
HIGH
SCHOOL!

...PRETEND
THIS
NEVER
HAPPENED.

...KOU-
CHAN
WILL
PROB-
ABLY...

AT
SCHOOL
...





CHATTER

わ

IF ANY KIDS GET MIXED IN, THEY'LL PROBABLY DIE!

COME ON, Y'ALL KNOW THE RULES ARE YA GOTTA BE 18 TO JOIN IN!

YEAH!

WILL YOU?

WATCHING'S FUN, BUT I WANNA PARTICIPATE!

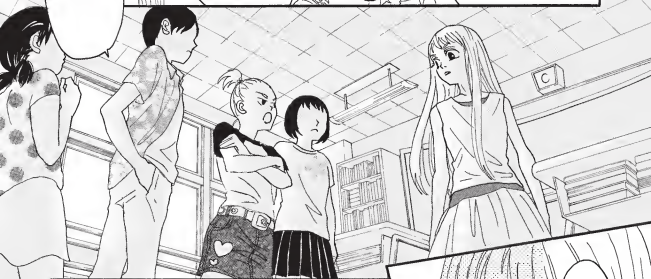
NATSU-ME-CHAN.

AT LEAST THEY STOPPED TALKING ABOUT THE ELOPING THING...

WHAT KIND OF FESTIVAL IS THIS ?!

は は は は は は は は は は

MY PAW'S A FISHERMAN, AN' HE LOSES TEETH EVERY YEAR!



...

YES?

...



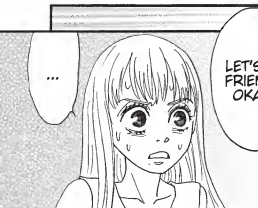
HEY,
NOW. 25

I GOT
CAUGHT
UP IN
IT!

I
DIDN'T
MEAN
TO
HURT
YOU!



I'M
SORRY
I EVER
SAID
ANYTHIN'
BAD
ABOUT
YOU!



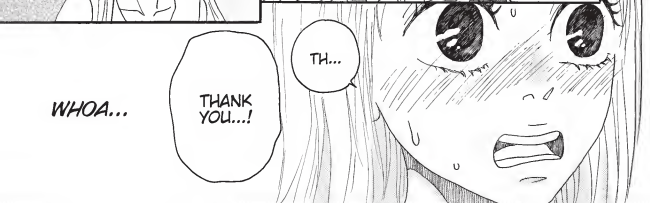
...

LET'S BE
FRIENDS,
OKAY?

WE'RE
REALLY
SORRY,
TOO!

YOU DON'T
NEED TO
SAY ALL
THAT,
HAYASE.

BUT...!



WHOA...

THANK
YOU....!

TH...

THIS IS
REALLY
UNEXPECTED!

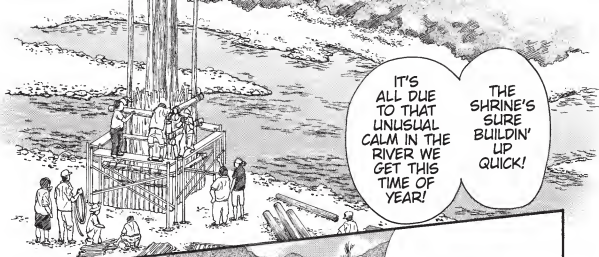


Just
leave
it!

THOUGH,
IT'S REALLY
SOMEONE ELSE
WHO NEEDS
TO APOLOGIZE
MORE!
It pisses me
off!

THAT
SURPRISED
ME.

HAYASE
...



IT'S
ALL DUE
TO THAT
UNUSUAL
CALM IN THE
RIVER WE
GET THIS
TIME OF
YEAR!

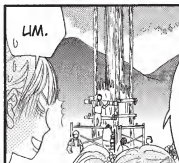
THE
SHRINE'S
SURE
BUILDIN'
UP
QUICK!

THEY'LL
ALL WEAR
HELMETS, TOO.
THIS 'UN HAS
THE POWER
TO KNOCK
ANYBODY FLAT
REGARDLESS
OF THAT
PERSON'S
TEAM!



ALL THE MEN
BORN 'ROUND
HERE'LL SOON
SPLIT INTO
"PROTECTORS"
AND "BURNERS"
AND FIGHT OVER
THIS BUILDING.

WAIT. CAN'T
ONLY MEN
OVER THE
AGE OF 18
PARTICIPATE?



UM.

THE WHOLE
AREA'S
OFF-LIMITS
TO WOMEN-
FOLK FOR A
WHOLE MONTH
BEFORE THE
FESTIVAL!

BY THE WAY,
THAT TREE IN
THE MIDDLE'S
FROM THE
MOUNTAIN
BEHIND
YER PLACE,
NATSUME-
CHAN!

YEP.
IT'S TOO
DANGER-
OUS.



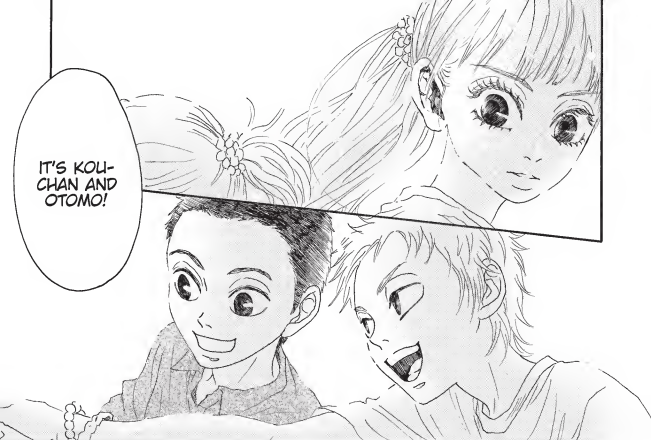
LOOK!

...IS
THAT
WHY
KOLI-
CHAN
WENT
THERE?



IT MAY
BE SMALL,
BUT THAT'S
S'POSED
TO BE THE
TRUE REST-
ING PLACE
OF THE GOD
HERE.

ALL
THE MEN
PARTICIPATIN'
HAVE TO
MAKE A
VISIT TO
THE SMALL
SHRINE
THERE FIRST.

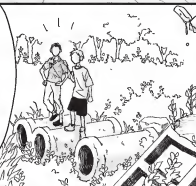


IT'S KOU-
CHAN AND
OTOMO!



NATSU-
ME-
CHAN'S
COMING,
TOO,
KOU-
CHAN!

WHY
DON'T
WE ALL
WATCH
TOGETHER?



Y'ALL
HAVIN'
A LOOK
BEFORE
THE
FESTIVAL?

HEY
!

...I
THOUGHT
YOU'D
FORGOTTEN
ABOUT THAT
WITH ALL
THIS FESTIVAL
BUSINESS...



AW!

HEY! I
NEVER
SAID
I'D
WEAR
THAT!

YOU'LL
GET TO
SEE HER
IN A
YUKATA!



THAT'S COLD!
'SPECIALLY
FROM SOME-
ONE WHO
ELOPED WITH
YOU!

...

KOU-CHAN
IS ACTING
ABOUT
HOW I
EXPECTED.



...DIDN'T
MEAN
ANYTHING
AT ALL TO
HIM.



THE
THINGS
THAT
WERE
SPECIAL
TO ME...

PACKAGE
FOR YOU.

NATSUME
MOCHIZUKI?

I WONDER IF
I CAN EVEN
MAKE HIM
MY ALLY, LET
ALONE MY
BOYFRIEND.



HINEMOSU INN

乙女守屋





...pose
nude
for
him?

So,
Natsume-
chan, how
about
you...

So you
agree!

...
THEY'RE
REALLY
BEAUTI-
FUL.



Umm,
hello?

...



Even
though
the plan
was to
use other
girls...

The photographer
Hirono-san has tak-
en quite a
liking to you, Nat-
sume-chan!

And so
rightly?

WHAT
EXACTLY
ARE YOU
ASKING?

WHAT...



**NO
WAY!**

WH-
WHAT?!

And
discuss
the
details.

If possible,
he'd like to
meet with
your parents
sometime
soon.

*This
is an amazing
opportunity for
you. One of the
greats asked
for you spe-
cifically! Tons
of people envy
your position
right now!*



*Just
think it
over.*

*Yeah, I
thought
you'd be
surprised.*

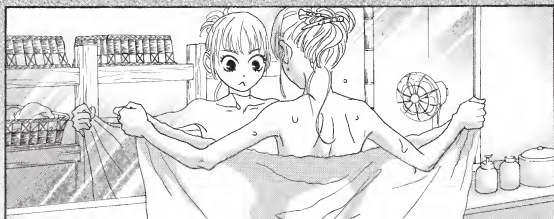
*And the
photos
will turn
out
great.*

*Okay
?*



*"MAYBE
THEN YOU'LL
GET ME
FLUSTERED."*

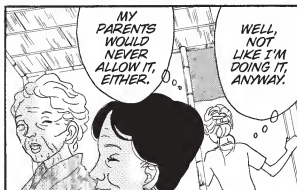
*"I WANT YOU
TO IMPRESS
ME."*





THERE'S
NOTHING
IMPRESSIVE
ABOUT
THIS!

JUST A
REGULAR
OLD
CHILDLIKE
BODY.



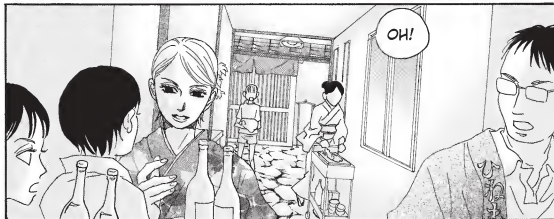
MY
PARENTS
WOULD
NEVER
ALLOW IT,
EITHER.

WELL,
NOT
LIKE I'M
DOING IT,
ANYWAY.



THEY
CALLED
IT THE
BEAUTIES'
BATH!

ハ
ラッ
RAP-AP-AP



OH!



NOW,
WHERE
DID IT
GET OFF
TO...?

I'VE
BEEN SO
BUSY, I
FORGOT
TO SET
IT OUT.

OH!

...WHERE'S
THE
YUKATA I'M
SUPPOSED
TO WEAR
TO THE
FESTIVAL?

UM,
MOM
...



I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE YOUR FATHER! HE PROMISED TO HELP WITH THE FESTIVAL PREPARATIONS, BUT ALL HE'S DONE IS DRINK!

IT'S FINE! I WANTED TO SLACK OFF ANYWAY.

I'M SKIPPING OUT ON WORK, AFTER ALL.

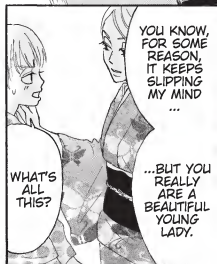
OH, CAN I?

WANT TO TRY IT ON?



IT'S AN OLD HAND-ME-DOWN OF MINE...

SORRY TO HAVE BOTHERED YOU WHEN YOU'RE SO BUSY!



YOU KNOW, FOR SOME REASON, IT KEEPS SLIPPING MY MIND ...

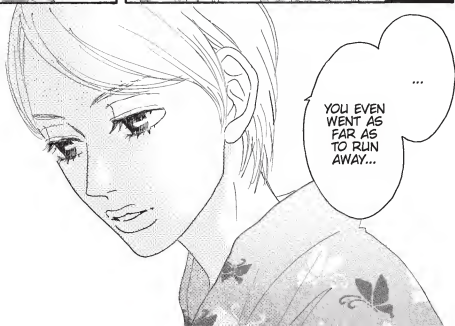
...BUT YOU REALLY ARE A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG LADY.

WHAT'S ALL THIS?



WOW! THANK YOU SO MUCH!

AAH, DRESSED UP NICE LIKE THIS, IT'S A WASTE IF I DON'T GO FOR A STROLL!



...
YOU EVEN WENT AS FAR AS TO RUN AWAY...

...IF THE
TWO OF US
HAD STAYED
IN TOKYO
SO YOU
COULD KEEP
MODELING.

MAYBE IT
WOULD
HAVE BEEN
BETTER...

YES,
MOTHER.
RIGHT
AWAY.

WHAT'S
THIS?
HAVE YOU
FINISHED
PREPARA-
TIONS
FOR THE
GATHERING?

MEIKO-
SAN!

HUH?

NO, IT'S
OKAY! I'M
OVER THE
MODELING
THING!

SHE SURE
LOOKED
LIKE SHE
WAS OVER-
WORKED.

MOM...

THE
FESTIVAL
AIN'T 'TIL
TOMOR-
ROW!

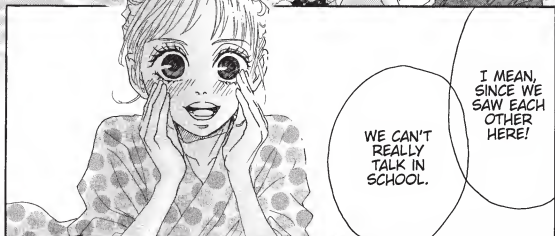
WHAT'S
WITH THE
GET-UP?



WHADDAYA
MEAN? WE
SEE EACH
OTHER IN
SCHOOL,
DON'T
WE?

IT'S BEEN
A
LONG
TIME
SINCE
WE
LAST
MET!

AH!



WE CAN'T
REALLY
TALK IN
SCHOOL.

I MEAN,
SINCE WE
SAW EACH
OTHER
HERE!

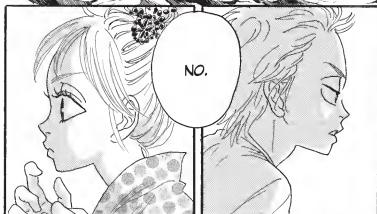


I'M IN A
YUKATA. I
CAN'T VERY
WELL GO
DOWN
THERE!

WHY
SHOULD
I?

COME
UP
HERE.

HEY.



NO.



...



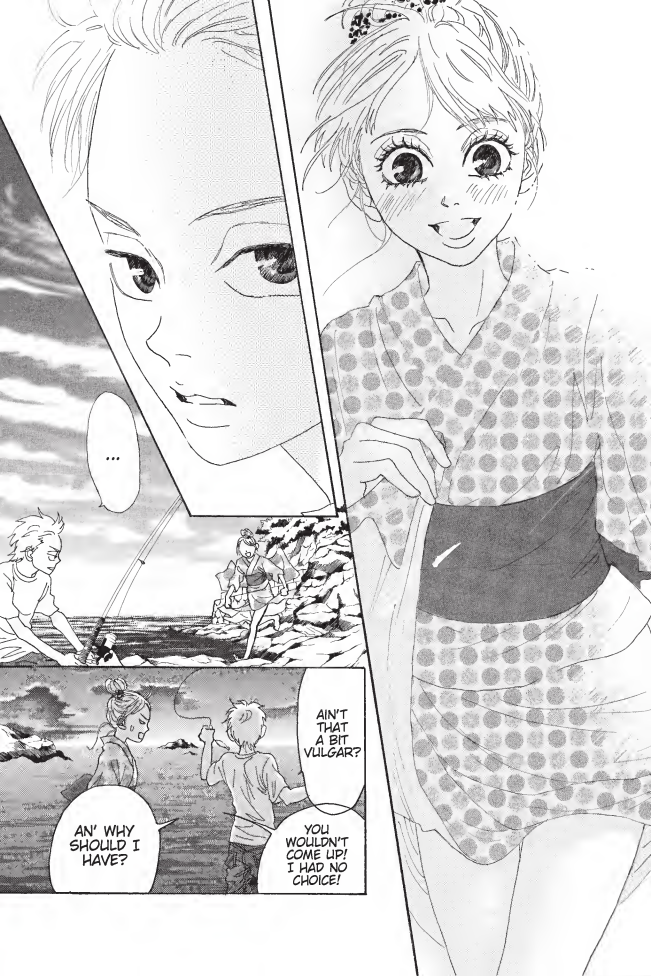
CLACK

カッ

CLACK

カッ

THERE!

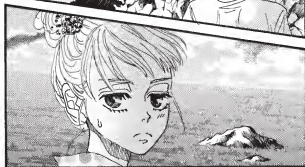


...

AN' WHY
SHOULD I
HAVE?

AIN'T
THAT
A BIT
VULGAR?

YOU
WOULDN'T
COME UP!
I HAD NO
CHOICE!



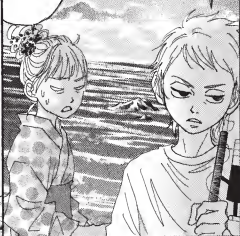
OH!

SO THE
OTHER
DAY, I GOT
A CALL
FROM MY
AGENCY...

YOU
WERE ALL
OVER THE
GIRLS
AT THE
MODELING
AGENCY...

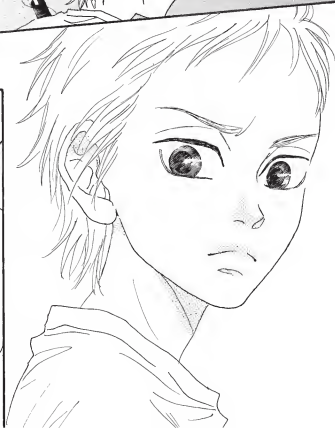
I
DON'T
WANT
NOTHIN'
TO DO
WITH GIRLS.

YOU KNOW
THE "KO"
IN "KO-
ICHIRO" IS
THE SAME
"KO" AS
"KOHA,"
RIGHT?



AH!

HE
LOOKED
RIGHT
AT ME!



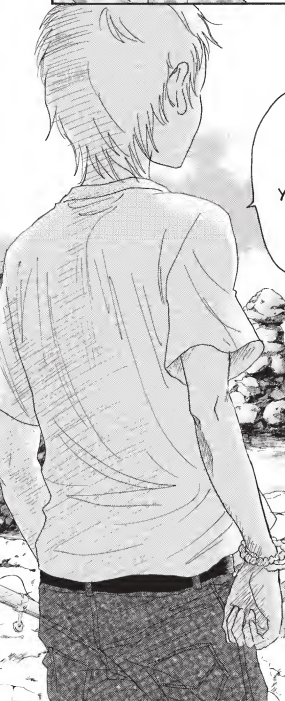


...I
REALLY
WANT
TO
SHOCK
HIM.

...IT'S SO
RIDICULOUS,
I CAN'T
HELP
LAUGHING!

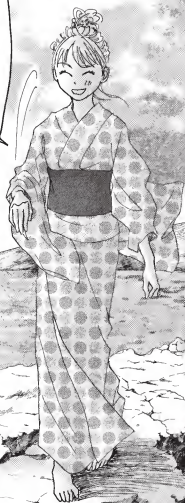
WHAT
THEY
SAID...

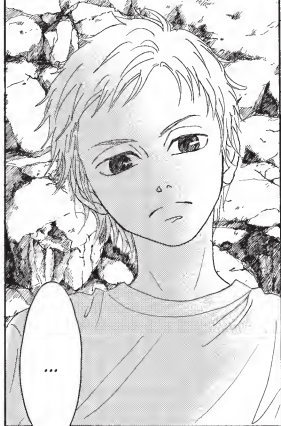
KOU-
CHAN...



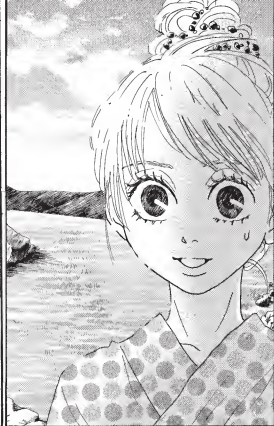
DO
YOU?

THEY
ASKED
IF I
WANTED
TO DO
A NUDE
SHOOT!





...



OF
COURSE
NOT!

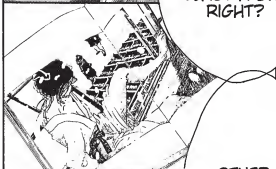
THAT
CASUAL
ATTITUDE
PISSES
ME OFF.

OF
COURSE
NOT? YOU
SERIOUS?

YA KNOW
THEY ASKED
FOR YOU
BY NAME,
RIGHT?



TRUTH IS,
YOU WANNA
DO IT AT
LEAST A BIT,
RIGHT?



OTHER-
WISE, WHY
GO AN'
TELL ME
ABOUT IT?

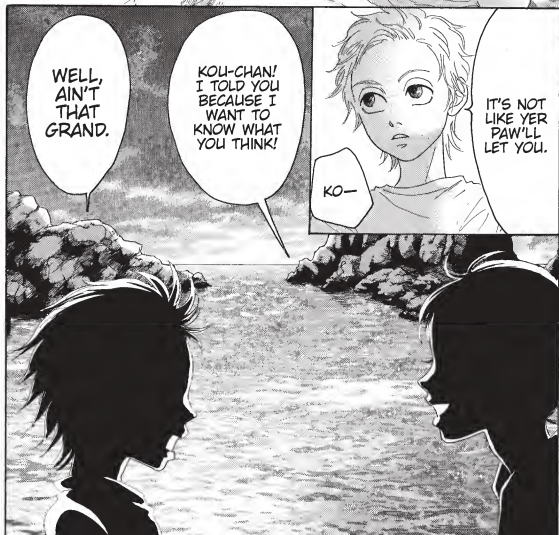
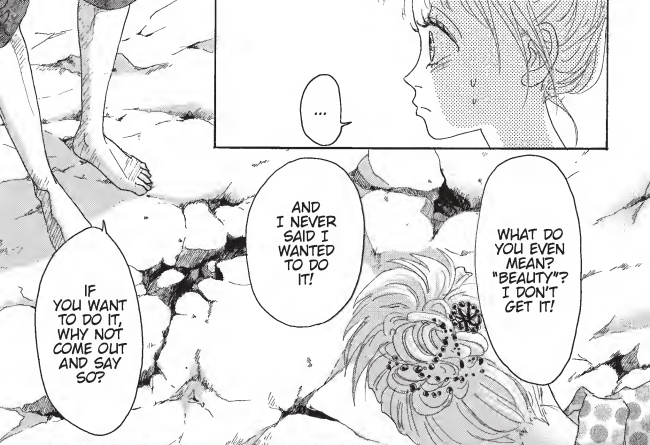


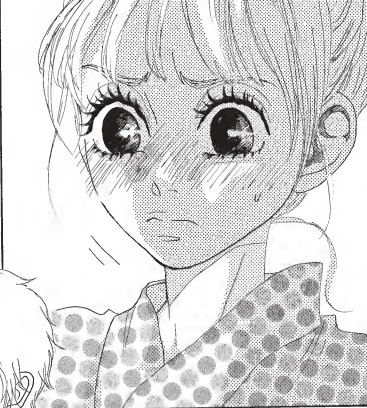
AM I
NOW?

YOU'RE
WRONG.

WHEN YOU
HAVE POWER,
YOU WANNA USE
IT. YOU WANNA
SHOW IT OFF.
AM I WRONG?

AT
ITS MOST
FUNDAMENTAL,
BEAUTY IS
JUST AN-
OTHER KIND
OF POWER,
RIGHT?





LOOK.
DO OR DON'T.
AIN'T GOT
NOTHIN' TO
DO WITH
ME.



I
DON'T
CARE.



...THAT
MAKES
ME
MAD.

NO
A SLUMP
!!

...



THAT'S
EXACTLY
IT!

"WELL,
AIN'T
THAT
GRAND."

THAT'S
WHY I
TOLD
YOU!

OF COURSE
I WANT YOU
TO THINK IT'S
IMPRESSIVE!

I NEVER
THOUGHT
IT'D
HAPPEN
TO ME!



ARGH,
DARN IT!

I JUST DIDN'T
EXPECT SUCH
A TO-THE-
POINT REPLY
LIKE THAT!



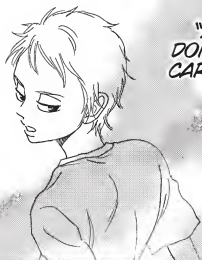
AT THIS
RATE HE'LL
NEVER BE
NICE TO ME.

I'VE
LOST
AGAIN...

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
IT...

WHAT DO
I HAVE TO
DO TO WIN
HIM OVER?

"I
DON'T
CARE."



WHAT DO I
HAVE TO DO
TO MAKE HIM
RESPECT ME?

...



AND THE
DRAGONS OF
THE SEA ARE
THE "PRO-
TECTORS."

THE TENGLU
OF THE
MOUNTAINS
ARE THE
"BURNERS."



I CAN'T
TELL
WHICH
ONE
DAD IS!

...ME,
NEI-
THER.

LOOKS
LIKE MY
DAD'S A
"BURNER."

THAT'S
REALLY
EXCIT-
ING!

SO YOU
REALLY
DON'T
KNOW
WHO'LL
WIN
FROM
YEAR TO
YEAR?

SIS!

*GUIDE TO UKIGUMO

HO!
HO!
HO!

うお
お
お

わ
RAH!

わ
HA!

WE ONLY
JUST NOW
GOT OUT
OF DOING
CHORES.

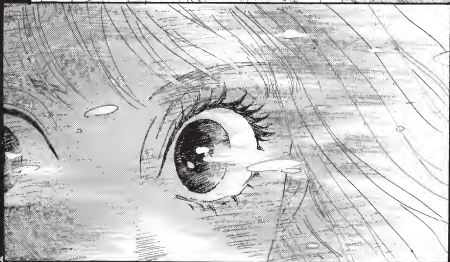
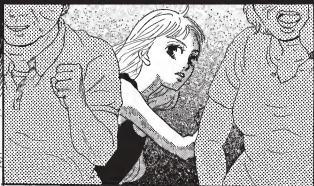
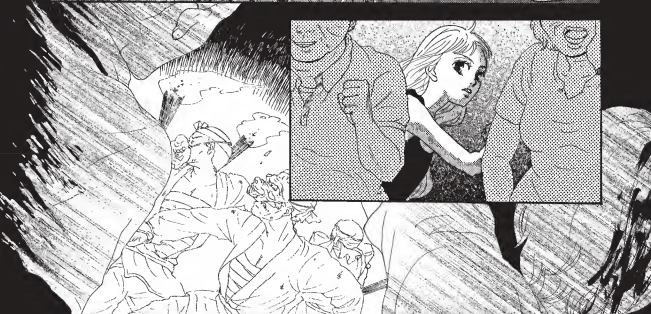
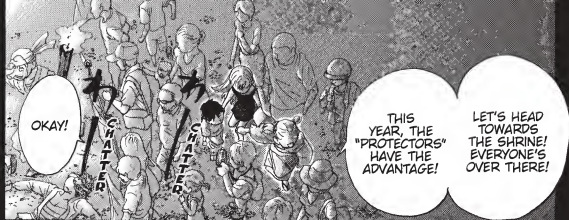
OH! IT'S
BEEN A
WHILE,
RYUTA-
KUN!

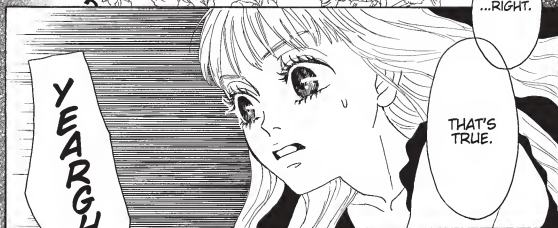
DIDJA
JUST GET
HERE,
NATSUME-
CHAN?

...EVEN IF
HE JUST
CALLED ME
"VULGAR"
WHEN HE
DID...

WELL,
KOU-CHAN
ALREADY
SAW ME
IN IT...

BUT YA
AIN'T
WEARIN' A
YUKATA?





I
KNEW
IT.

THAT
SENSE
OF LIGHT
JUST
HAD TO
BE...







THAT
POWER...

THE
WHIRL-
POOL...

THOCK



WHOA!

HE'S LIKE A REAL TENGU!

HE'S LIKE
A REAL
TENGLU!



I WANT TO SWIM LIKE THAT, TOO, KICKING EVERYTHING ELSE ASIDE!



"WHEN YOU
HAVE POWER,
YOU WANNA
USE IT. YOU
WANNA SHOW
IT OFF. AM I
WRONG?"

...TO THE
TEST.

I WANT
TO PUT
MY
POWER...

CONTINUED IN DROWNING LOVE VOLUME TWO



*Drowning
Love*

DROWNING LOVE VOLUME 1

TRANSLATION NOTES

Shibuya, page 8

[8.2]

Shibuya is one of the major districts in Tokyo and is considered a trendy hangout place full of cafés, restaurants, shops, nightclubs, and other attractions.



Hinemosu Inn, page 10

[10.2]

Hinemosu Inn is an example of a *ryokan*, a traditional Japanese inn featuring large common areas, communal baths, and *tatami*-mat rooms with traditional Japanese amenities. Meals called *kaiseki*, a traditional Japanese cuisine that concentrates on using fresh, local ingredients, are included in the price of a room.



New Year's kimono, page 13

[13.2]

The New Year's celebration involves wearing very beautiful and often expensive *kimono* during the year's first visit to the shrine. These *kimono* are typically *only* worn during New Year's.



Mistress, page 13

[13.2]

As mistress of the *ryokan*, Meiko is essentially a hostess—she's responsible for greeting and entertaining the guests, which includes conversation, music, and serving food and drink.

Torī gates, page 15

[15.4]

These bright vermilion red gates indicate that the place beyond them is sacred ground. Usually they are found in front of shrines, but *torī* are also found in front of certain natural areas thought to be inhabited by gods.



"all rise", "bow", page 39

[39.6]

In Japanese schools, classes begin with a short ceremony showing respect for the teacher. The student on duty calls the other students to attention, leads them in bowing, then instructs them to sit so class can begin.



DROWNING LOVE VOLUME 1 TRANSLATION NOTES

Opening ceremonies, page 42 [42.3]

As part of the first day of school, the principal, certain other teachers, and the student representatives all give speeches.



Standing as a punishment, page 70 [70.3]

One of the more common punishments in Japanese schools requires a student to stand for the entire class period, sometimes even while holding a heavy object such as a bucket of water! The standing students usually stand at the back of the classroom or in the hallway just outside the class.



Kannushi, page 71 [71.3]

A *kannushi* is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of a shrine. It's a full-time job, including cleaning the shrine, changing the rice, water, incense, and other offerings left to the god enshrined there, and doing other tasks to serve the shrine and the community. They are often assisted in their duties by part-time priestesses called *miko*.



Harajuku, page 75 [75.1]

Harajuku is a district in Tokyo mostly known for its thriving fashion culture. The district is littered with dozens of small independent clothing boutiques offering styles unique to the district. Fashion trends in Japan usually begin in Harajuku and spread from there as they are copied by clothing stores in other cities.



Bowing on the phone, page 76 [76.2]

Even though the editorial staff can't see her, Natsume is bowing as she makes the request. Because bowing is pretty much a reflex, it's common to do so even over the phone in the appropriate places.



DROWNING LOVE VOLUME 1
TRANSLATION NOTES

BOM-BA-YE, page 89

[89.2]

BOM-BA-YE is a professional wrestler with a very distinctive appearance. The teacher in question happens to look a lot like him.



White snake, page 97

[97.1]

It's considered very lucky in Japan to encounter a white snake. White snakes are thought to be messengers and servants of Benzaiten, the goddess of love and good fortune. Sometimes businessmen even carry a picture of a white snake with them to guarantee good luck in their business affairs.



Clapping while praying, page 115

[115.3]

When praying to a god, you must first attract the god's attention. In most shrines, this involves ringing a bell, then clapping twice, after which you silently make your prayer.



"Fight with Fire" festival, page 155

[155.3]

Many shrines in Japan have yearly festivals where the people they serve gather together to strengthen the community. The festival depicted in this chapter might seem a little extreme, but it's actually based on a real-life festival, the Nozawa Onsen Dōsojin Matsuri. Like in the comic, participants of the Dōsojin Matsuri split into two teams, one of which tries to protect a wooden structure built for the event while the other tries to burn it down with torches and flaming projectiles.



True resting place, page 158

[158.4]

Gods in *shinto* inhabit objects called *shintai*, usually kept in small shrines called *honden*. A *honden* is usually surrounded by a larger shrine, but in this case the *honden* is separate from the main shrine complex.



DROWNING LOVE VOLUME 1

TRANSLATION NOTES

Yukata, page 159

[159.4]

A lighter version of a *kimono*.

While some kinds of *yukata* are used for lounging around the house (or a *ryokan*), *yukata* with more ornate patterns and designs are worn to festivals, especially in the summer.



Putting on the yukata, page 165

[165.3]

Like most *kimono*, festival *yukata* require the help of another person to put on properly.



Kōha, page 170

[170.1]

This word not only refers to a tough, manly man, but also someone who rejects feminine things like fashion or romance.



Tengu and dragons, page 177

[177.4]

Tengu are a kind of *yōkai*, or monster, that lives in the mountains. They are fierce, warlike protectors of certain mountains or forests, and can shape shift between a humanlike form and that of a bird, usually a crow. Modern depictions usually give them a red face and a comically long nose. In contrast, dragons are benevolent gods who are the source of all water. There's a dragon for every body of water that acts as its protector.



Drowning Love 1

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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English digital edition published by Kodansha Advanced Media, LLC,
San Francisco.

www.kodanshacomics.com

ISBN: 9781682336526

Digital Edition: 1.0.0

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YKS Services LLC/SKY Japan, INC.

